

kitchen & bath DESIGN NEWS[®]

The leading business, design and product resource for the kitchen & bath trade

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Whirlpools, Tubs, Saunas
Enhance Spa Experience



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Aurora - Q2003

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Photo: Kate Benjamin Photography

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Small Kitchens Get Luxury Touches

While not necessarily luxurious in square footage, these smaller kitchens feature designer creativity and plenty of luxury touches.

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Photo: Courtesy LivingKitchen Exhibition, Cologne Germany Press Office, 2015

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Consumer Hot Buttons

Kitchen and bath consumers are making clear choices when it comes to the products they want most, and what they're willing to splurge on, according to a new RICKI study.



Photos: Carlos Aristizabal

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Accessible Kitchens

Products that promote greater accessibility and ease of use in the kitchen continue to shine.



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Evolving Consumer Tastes Reshaping Design Landscape

Today's ever-broadening consumer base is very clear about the changing array of products they deem as 'must-haves,' and savvy pros should incorporate those preferences in the kitchens and baths they design and sell.

Today's consumers are sending a very clear message to the kitchens and bath design trade, and it's one that should resonate throughout the showrooms and offices of dealers and designers across America.

The message is this: We are changing, our homes are changing, our product preferences are changing – and you, the design professional, need to be in close touch with all of that if you're going to earn our business in 2015 and beyond.

That message, in reality, is really nothing new, of course. Success for dealers and designers has always been defined largely by their ability to design and sell kitchens and

baths that reflect the needs and tastes of clients.

What is new, however, is the specific palette of products that today's ever-broadening consumer base is gravitating toward these days – the hot buttons that excite clients, the products they deem as "must-haves," what they're willing to splurge on, and what they're willing to sacrifice when budgets get tight.


All of those issues are explored in a new market survey conducted exclusively for *Kitchen & Bath Design News* by the Research Institute for Cooking & Kitchen Intelligence (RICKI). The online poll, conducted among more than 300

dealers and designers, revealed that the top "must-haves" for today's kitchens include full-extension drawers, trash/recycling bins, a kitchen island, deep drawers, more accessible storage, custom or semi-custom cabinets and LED lighting. The survey also found that clients are most readily willing to splurge on countertops, while women are much more likely than men to splurge on such things as decorative

Separate recent surveys also indicate that consumer product preferences are reflecting homes that are smaller, greener, offer more casual living space and feature the inclusion of energy-saving technology, as well as custom features that can accommodate varying levels of mobility (see **Consumer Buying Trends, Page 8**).

Open shelving, open floor plans, under-counter options, granite countertops, natural flooring materials, ergonomic design – these are but a fraction of the key trends mirrored by a client base that's steadily diversifying to include an ever-changing mix of Gen X, Baby Boomers and Gen Y, as well as mature adults looking to age in place.

Cutting-edge design must reflect these kinds of current consumer preferences. And cutting-edge designers seeking success must have a firm handle on who their clients are, how they're changing and how their needs and tastes are continuing to evolve.

When it comes to building and sustaining a successful design practice, there is no substitute for that mindset and that knowledge – simply no other way to conduct business. 

Eliot Sefrin

"Cutting-edge designers must have a firm handle on who their clients are, how those clients are changing, and what needs and tastes they have."

hardware, accessible storage features, sinks, dishwashers, countertops, faucets, cabinetry and cooking appliances.

When it comes to the bathroom, dealers and designers report that "his-and-hers" vanities are most essential to clients, while other leading "must-haves" include water-saving showerheads/toilets, customized storage, radiant heated floors, natural stone countertops, rainfall showerheads and furniture-style vanities. As is the case with kitchens, clients splurge more on countertops than on any other bathroom feature, and women are much more likely than men to splurge on such products as tubs, storage features and vanities.

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*Tub/shower option requires batteries.



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Market Continues Its Crawl Toward Recovery

Supported by an array of strengthening fundamentals, the nation's housing market opened the New Year on its continued, albeit up-and-down, path to recovery. Among the key statistics and forecasts released in recent weeks by government agencies, research firms and industry-related trade associations were the following:

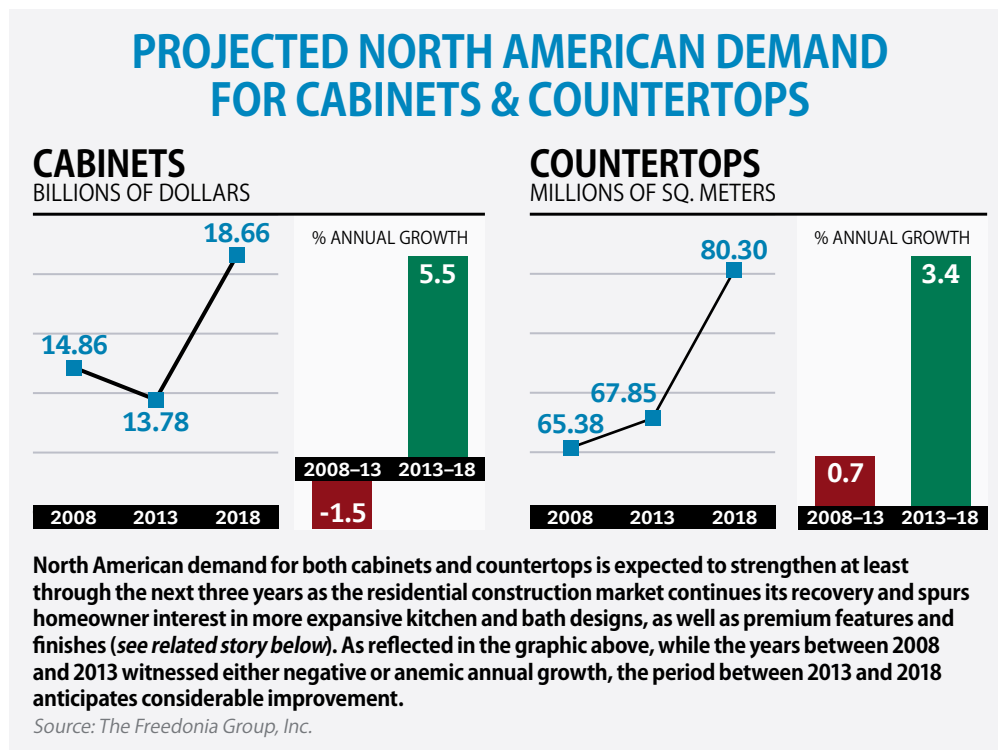
HOUSING STARTS

Builder confidence in the market for newly built, single-family homes is reported down slightly, although the dip is attributable less to weakening market conditions than to supply chain issues such as lot and labor shortages, as well as tight underwriting standards, the National Association of Home Builders said last month. "Even with the slight slip in confidence, we expect the market to improve as we enter the spring buying season," said NAHB Chairman Tom Woods. The sentiment is echoed by NAHB Chief Economist David Crowe, who said the Washington, DC-based trade association is "expecting solid gains" in housing this year, buoyed by sustained job growth, low

mortgage interest rates and pent-up demand.

EXISTING-HOME SALES

The market for existing-home sales "got off to a disappointing start" to begin 2015, although "all indications point to modest gains" ahead, according to the chief economist for the National Association of Realtors. NAR chief economist Lawrence Yun said last month that current signs indicate that many buyers are overcoming tight supply to sign contracts at a pace "that highlights the underlying demand that exists in today's market." Contract activity is up compared to a year ago, despite comparable inventory levels," Yun said, adding that "the difference this year are positive factors supporting stronger sales, such as slightly improving credit conditions, more jobs and slower price growth." Total existing-homes sales in 2015 are forecast to be 5.26 million, a gain of 6.4% from 2014. The national median existing-home price is expected to rise 5%. In 2014, existing-home sales fell 2.9% and prices rose 5.7%, the NAR said.



CABINET & VANITY SALES

Sales of kitchen cabinets and vanities began 2015 on a positive note, gaining in January over the same month a year ago, the Kitchen Cabinet Manufacturers Association said last month. According to the Reston, VA-based KCMA, manufacturers participating in the association's monthly "Trend of Business" survey reported that January sales

of cabinets and vanities rose 4.6% over January, 2014. Although sales of stock cabinets fell 4.9%, semi-custom cabinet sales gained 13.8% and custom cabinet sales rose 13.3%, the KCMA said.

APPLIANCE SHIPMENTS

Domestic shipments of major home appliances rose sharply in February, with year-to-date figures through the first two months of 2015 up over the

previous year's numbers, according to the Association of Home Appliance Manufacturers. The Washington, DC-based AHAM reported last month that February, 2015 appliance shipments totaled 5.29 million units, up 11.5% from the 4.75 million units shipped in February, 2014. Year-to-date shipments through February were up 4.9% over the total for the first two months of 2014, AHAM said.

MARKET ANALYSIS

Growth Seen In Demand For Cabinets, Countertops

Cleveland, OH — The U.S., the world's largest market for cabinets, will see "strong increases" in annual demand through at least 2018, while the continued recovery in residential construction will similarly fuel growth in both North American and global demand for countertops.

Those are the findings of a newly released pair of studies from The Freedonia Group, Inc., a Cleveland-based industry market research firm.

Following the collapse in housing construction that began in 2006, demand for both cabinets and countertops declined for several years. However, the current recovery in residential construction is expected to boost U.S. cabinet demand to about

\$16 billion, and North American demand to \$18.6 billion, in 2018, according to Freedonia. North American countertop demand is projected to grow to an annual market of 80.3 million sq. meters in 2018 (see related chart, above).

"In addition to stronger construction activity, interest in more expansive kitchen and bathroom designs will boost unit demand for cabinets, while rising interest in premium features and finishes will support value growth," the research firm said.

Gains in North American countertop demand will also benefit from growing consumer preference "for spacious kitchens and multiple bathrooms that require more countertop area," researchers added.



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Cabinet Trends Seen Reflecting Smaller, Greener, More Casual Homes



Photo: MasterBrand Cabinets

Jasper, IN — Cabinet design preferences, a mirror of consumer buying patterns, will reflect homes that are smaller, greener and offer more casual living space – a trend that will continue to see the inclusion of energy-saving technology, as well as custom features with the ability to accommodate varying levels of mobility.

That's the word from MasterBrand Cabinets, the parent company of cabinet manufacturers that include Aristokraft, Decora, Diamond, HomeCrest, Kemper, KitchenCraft, Omega and Schrock.

The Jasper, IN-based MasterBrand recently forecasted a series of trends impacting kitchen design, as well as cabinet purchases, in 2015. Among the key trends noted are the following:

➔ Many new kitchens are favoring a streamlined look, featuring large window expanses that incorporate few wall cabinets. Open shelving is popular. Professional-style appliances such as free-standing stainless steel gas ranges, the trend for years, are being challenged by sleek induction cooktops paired with double wall ovens. Under-counter options are increasingly prominent, with drawers that double as refrigerators, wine storage and even a pull-out microwave.

➔ Today's cabinet styling trends favor "less is more" aesthetics, emphasizing clean lines and simpler mouldings

MasterBrand Cabinets has forecast that large window expanses in kitchens will be hot in 2015, as well as matte finishes and warm neutrals on cabinetry.

with accents that offer personalization. Granite countertops continue to be in demand and are being partnered with butcher block, stainless steel and other surfaces in a variety of thicknesses, each selected for a specific kitchen task. Backsplashes are generally comprised of glossy ceramic, porcelain or glass tile in either subtle or bold color combinations – sometimes a combination of both. Natural flooring materials such as ceramic, stone, hardwood and cork are favored by homeowners, along with reclaimed and distressed wood finishes in wider, hand-scraped planks. Colors range from gray and charcoal to bone and espresso.

➔ "Inclusive Design" features – including zero-step entries and showers, widened door and hallways, multi-level cabinets and non-slip flooring – will be commonplace in the average home, and will be important for people who choose to "age in place," as well as for families that blend multiple generations under one roof.

➔ Color trends are soft, moving away from stark whites in favor of creamy neutral palettes with a hint of color such as gold, lavender, blue, green and raisin. Painted, stained and matte cabinet fin-

ishes are being increasingly mixed with wood, usually in earth tones including muted greens, chiffon yellows and deep blues, as well as browns, reds, blacks and grays.

➔ Open floor plans continue to satisfy the desire for gathering and connecting, while allowing a transition for multi-purpose uses – integrating foyer, kitchen, dining and living functions. Glass walls, sliding doors and other transparent features open the home to patio or garden rooms. Home management is being facilitated by utilizing a service entry that features a message center with key racks, mail slots and individual lockers for each family member.

➔ For faucets, the convenience of a pull-out model is a desired feature, as are pot fillers. Brushed nickel is the leading finish option, followed by pewter, polished chrome and oil-rubbed bronze colorations. French door and bottom freezer drawer refrigerator models continue to dominate the market, and healthy living is a strong trend, with more kitchens featuring steam ovens, induction cooking and warming drawers to keep nutritious dinners ready for active family members. 

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Designers Discuss Client Interest in Accessibility

Kitchen & Bath Design News recently posed these questions to dealers and designers in the kitchen and bath industry: Do you need to 'sell' your clients on accessible products, or do they ask for them? Do these products appeal primarily to older baby boomers and mature clients, or is there interest from younger clients as well? Are products designed for accessibility truly 'mainstream,' or are they still more of a niche market?

"For those who must have accessible products for a condition or chronic need, we search out the best solution for their specific requirements. Obviously function is the first priority, but when the aesthetics are built in, it makes the space great for everyone. As a company, our culture is to design and build for the future, so we ask, 'Can we make accommodations for future use by widening doorways, framing for future openings behind the walls like installation blocking for grab bars or doors between rooms?' I have found it far easier to talk with moms about universal/accessible design. Reminding them of the changes in their bodies when they were pregnant, managing doorways, walkways and the house with a baby on their hip or in a stroller. That's when you get the 'a-ha!' moments and can turn their attention to the need to design and build spaces that are easier to live in today, and in the future.

*Elizabeth Springs, CKD, CBD
CGBP, CAPS
Springs Construction
Redwood City, CA*

"Accessible products cover a broad spectrum of products. We educate our clients about what is available for accessible products rather than sell. Most people have some knowledge of what is available out there, but may need a little more guidance on how items can translate into home use. We see more baby boomers and mature clients leaning towards utilization of accessible products, such as grab bars in bathrooms. If we consider accessible products as 'ease-of-use,' we see this as more mainstream rather than niche market use in the kitchen. We see roll-out shelves and drawer cabinets, sensor faucets and lever doorknobs. Further education about accessible products will broaden a better understanding for the masses as well as [inspire] more product development.

*Cheryl Ryan, CKD, Allied ASID
Kitchens by Design, Inc.
Elm Grove, WI*

"We offer accessible products to all of our customers. We provide good, better and best grades of cabinets. Each grade has a selection and variety of accessible cabinetry. Some of our favorites have been tray

base cabinets that feature the ability to stand up tall trays, cutting boards and cookie sheets, so they don't get stacked horizontally and buried. They come in a variety of widths. Another favorite is a 6" or 9" narrow spice base cabinets – great for large oil bottles and large spice containers. The most popular accessible cabinet is our wide stack of drawer base cabinets. The deeper drawers are perfect for pots and pans with covers. Not having to go into a second base cabinet to find pot covers, or deal with rooting around in the depths of a standard base cabinet is a pleasure. Some of our customers who have difficulty lifting their arms above their shoulders love the stack of drawers base cabinet for their dishes. We install a pegboard bottom and pegs for plates and bowls. These products appeal to baby boomers and to serious cooks, young and old, who appreciate how difficult it is to find what you need quickly. Proper organization in your new kitchen truly relieves stress and makes cooking more enjoyable.

*Mitch Grosshandler, Owner
Keystone Kitchens
Bohemia, NY*

"In our business, we approach accessible design on a case-by-case basis, making suggestions to suit our clients' current and future needs. We get to know all of our customers enough to design intelligently for them...working to consider them physically using the space and ensuring they get the most out of it. We, of course, take extra care when working with people who have particular limitations. Most of our clients will have a cursory interest in accessibility, but are not really committed to it unless they know that they do or will need it directly. Regardless of age, our customers are looking for the most beautiful and efficient use of space and resources. Accessibility language and ideas are mainstream, but the use of these products and designs remains a specialty.

*Lance Stratton, Partner,
Folio+Stratton
Del Mar, CA*

"Yes, we need to sell accessible products to our clients; most clients do not ask nor do they even realize that this type of product exists within our industry. With baby boom-

ers, aging-in-place accessible products or Universal Design is an increasingly popular topic within kitchen and bath design, therefore, it has become increasingly discussed with our more mature clients. When the topic comes up in conversation regarding accessible products to the younger buying group, they are a little taken aback that it is even a topic of conversation. But, as an industry, we need to realize and promote that in design, safety is a very important part of a proper kitchen or bathroom design. Most clients think of accessible products as handicap safety bars, but it goes way beyond that. As professionals, we need to educate the consumer on the life safety products on the market and the value they add to their project.

*Peter J. Albanese, CKD, CBD
Creative Kitchen & Bath
Wayne, NJ*

"Itend to build accessible features into my designs, and talk about their functionality and how they contribute to ease-of-use in the entire space. In a kitchen, storage of often-used items is located in easily reached places, and I would recommend suitable appliances, such as an induction cooktop, as an added safety feature for households of all ages. In the bath, zero entry showers are always well-received, even if not specifically to address an accessibility issue. Boomers and mature clients are very active and do not often care to address the possibility of limited mobility in the future. I have rarely installed grab bars in a master bath for clients of any age, because they perceive it as an institutional look, even though many beautiful decorative bars are available. I do have blocking installed in the walls for future grab bars or seats, so they can be added later if needed. Overall, people of all ages are requesting spaces that are highly functional and easy to use, but products and design for those with specific mobility or other needs remains a niche market.

*Cathy Driftmier, Lead Designer
Dybdahl Design Group
Middleton, WI*

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Indianapolis Will Serve as Site of April Seminar

Wilmette, IL — Indianapolis will serve as the latest location for “Art + Science,” the series of all-day seminars being presented by *Kitchen & Bath Design News* in key U.S. markets throughout the year.

The seminar series, currently in its third and final year, is scheduled to continue its 2015 run on Thursday, April 16 at the Indianapolis Marriott North, Indianapolis. The program, which has already visited Miami and New Orleans this year, will also be presented in Nashville, Cleveland, Kansas City, Baltimore/Washington, DC and San Diego, according to *KBDN* Publisher Emeritus Eliot Sefrin.

2015 dates and targeted cities, beyond this month, include:

- May 21, Nashville.
- June 18, Cleveland.
- September 23, Kansas City.
- October 29, San Diego.
- November, Baltimore/Washington, DC.

Corporate co-sponsors of the educational initiative include BEST, Hafele America, Jenn-Air, Plain & Fancy, Rev-A-Shelf and Showplace Wood Products.

“Art + Science” – subtitled “How Contemporary Design & Cutting-Edge Technology Can Increase Profits & Resonate With Today’s New Clients” – was rolled out in 2013. Aimed at kitchen and bath designers looking to refresh their creative talents and expand their technological skills, “Art + Science” is targeted at identifying “what’s next” in design and technology so that design professionals can better address the needs of a younger, less-traditional client while increasing company profits in the New Digital Age.

“Art + Science” spotlights the growing trend toward contemporary kitchens and baths that require an entirely new way of managing the space and connecting the elements of the room. Also featured is a multi-media program that presents a vision of the industry’s digital present and future, including ways design professionals can leverage cutting-edge technological tools from initial client contact through final contract.

Leading the programs is a pair of *KBDN* contributors: Ellen Cheever, CMKBD, ASID, CAPS, widely

Art + SCIENCE SEMINAR SERIES



ELLEN CHEEVER, CMKBD,
ASID, CAPS



ERIC SCHIMELPFENIG,
AKBD

considered to be the nation’s premier kitchen and bath design authority, and Eric Schimelpfenig, AKBD, a leading authority on cutting-edge technology impacting the kitchen and bath industry.

Information about attending or sponsoring any of the 2015 programs can be obtained by visiting *KBDN*’s Web site, www.KBDNseminars.com, or calling Publisher Paul Degrandis at (847) 421-2737.

Fortune Brands to Acquire Norcraft Companies

Deerfield, IL — Fortune Brands Home & Security has signed an agreement to acquire Norcraft Companies, a leading, publicly owned manufacturer of kitchen and bathroom cabinetry.

The purchase price is \$25.50 per share, resulting in an enterprise value of approximately \$600 million. The transaction will be financed under Fortune Brands’ existing credit facility. Norcraft’s 2014 sales were \$376 million. Additional details will be provided on the Fortune Brands first quarter earnings call.

It was expected that Fortune Brands would launch a tender offer for all outstanding Norcraft shares by mid-April. Upon completion of the tender offer, Norcraft will be merged into Fortune Brands’ cabinets business. The transaction is subject to the tender of a majority of Norcraft’s shares and certain other customary closing conditions, and is expected to close in the second quarter.

“The combination of the two best cabinet businesses in North America is exciting,” said Chris Klein, chief executive officer, Fortune Brands. “Norcraft has proven capabilities and great relationships in the dealer channel with strong operating management throughout their business. The combination will strengthen our overall product offering, round out our regional market penetration and enhance our frameless capabilities. We see many opportunities for enhanced growth by bringing these businesses together.”

“We believe Fortunes Brands’ scale and resources provide a highly complementary platform to continue enhancing our entire organization while generating meaningful value for our shareholders,” said Mark Buller, chairman and chief executive officer of Norcraft.

Among Fortune Brands Home & Security are MasterBrand cabinets, Moen faucets, Therma-Tru entry door systems, and Master Lock and SentrySafe security products.

Norcraft Companies produces Mid Continent Cabinetry, Norcraft Cabinetry, UltraCraft, StarMark Cabinetry, Fieldstone Cabinetry, Brookwood and Urban Effects.

KBDN-SEN Series Set for Miami, DC

Wilmette, IL — Miami this month and Washington, DC in May are the next two locations scheduled as sites for the 2015 series of all-day seminars being brought to the market under the terms of an exclusive educational partnership between *Kitchen & Bath Design News* and the SEN Design Group.

The six-city *KBDN-SEN* seminar series will be presented at the Cosentino/Silestone showroom in Miami on April 29 and at Cosentino’s Washington, DC showroom on May 13.

Additional 2015 dates include:

- June 3, Detroit.
- October 7, Chicago.
- October 28, Phoenix.

Titled “Learn How to Double Your Sales Volume Using a Proven Selling System,” the program will be led by SEN President Ken Peterson, CKD. Created specifically for showroom owners, managers and sales designers, the programs focus on how kitchen and bath dealers can improve closing percentages, sales volume and gross margins by implementing a well-thought-out selling system keyed to today’s market.

Corporate sponsors of the 2015 educational initiative include Silestone by Cosentino, Hafele America, Holiday Kitchens, Task Lighting, WoodTrac by Sauder, Warmly Yours, GuildQuality, Dacor and The Distribution Point.

Information, including registration details, is available by contacting the SEN Design Group, at (800) 991-1711.

DIFFA Raises Charity Funds

New York, NY — The 2015 edition of DIFFA’s DINING BY DESIGN, which took place at Pier 92 in New York City during the 2015 Architectural Digest Home Design Show, featured the theme ‘All Together Now’ ‘Together all for DIFFA.’ The event raised over \$750,000 in the fight against HIV/AIDS. Shown is one of the table vignettes, this one designed by Marc Blackwell New York.



Photo: timothy bell

Elmira Celebrates 40th Anniversary

Elmira, ON — Elmira Stove Works is celebrating its 40th anniversary in 2015, and made a few announcements to go along with the event.

As part of the anniversary celebration, the company will be holding a sweepstakes in the U.S. and Canada. The Northstar Fab Forty Fridge sweepstakes presents the opportunity for one person in each country to win a Northstar Model 1949 11-cubic foot retro refrigerator. The contest began on March 15 and will run through September 30.

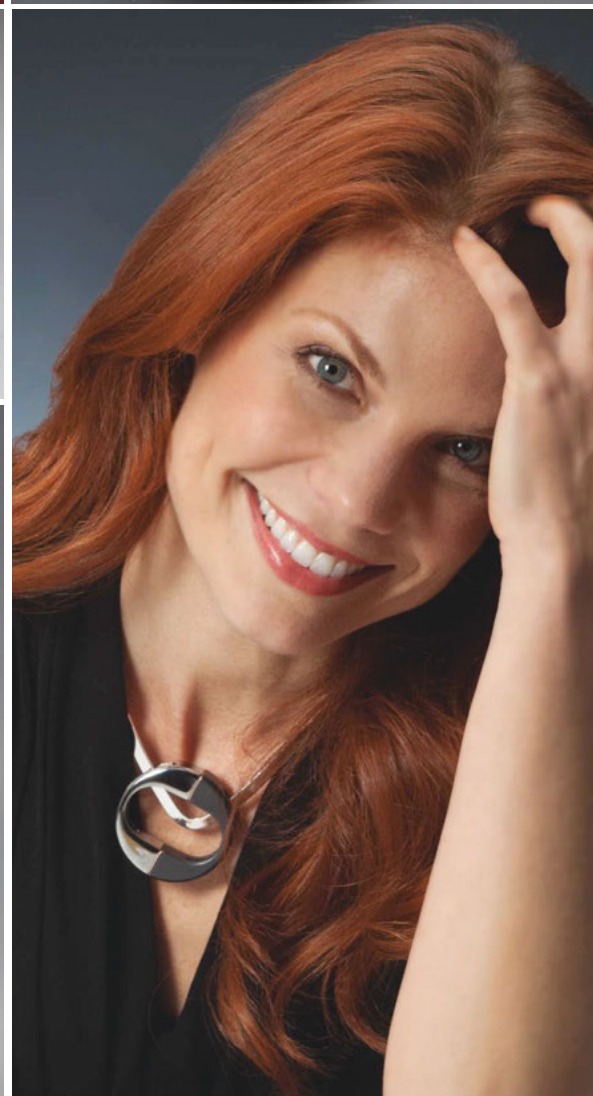
Company founder and CEO

Tom Hendrick has also announced that his son, Brian Hendrick, will be assuming the role of president of the firm, with Tony Dowling being named v.p. of sales and marketing.

"We're looking ahead, not back," says Brian Hendrick. "We have some exciting new products in the works, and we're continually working on new programs and promotions to assist

our dealers in keeping our products front-of-mind with the consumer. 2015 is going to be an exciting year, and the first of many more great years to come."

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BlueStar Announces Competition

Reading, PA — BlueStar has announced its first Kitchen Design Competition, created to honor design professionals who incorporate BlueStar products into innovative kitchen designs.

One Grand Prize winner will receive BlueStar appliances for their home kitchen, the title BlueStar Kitchen Designer of the Year, plus a trip to New York City for the 2016 Architectural Digest Home Design Show. Six Regional Winners will also be named.

A panel of judges, led by interior designer Eric Cohler, will determine the winning entry. Cohler is known for a mix of classical and contemporary styles – enhanced by jolts of unexpected color and pattern.

The competition is open for entries through January 31, 2016, with the winner to be announced before March 1, 2016. The design entry can be any style kitchen, and a minimum of one BlueStar cooking appliance as the primary cooking appliance is required. Official rules and entry criteria can be found at <http://bluestarcooking.com/buzz/design-contest>.



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Circle No. 7 on Product Card

Kohler Joins Sustainable Campaign to Save Water

Kohler, WI — Kohler Co. has joined forces with *Change the Course*, a first of its kind water sustainability campaign to support water flow restoration projects in the Colorado River Basin. Kohler's participation is part of the company's sustainability efforts, which includes driving awareness of water-related issues and encouraging consumers to take action.

"The economic and environmental benefits of reducing water consumption are significant no matter where you live in North America. But with *Change the Course*, your pledge and the actions you take to reduce water use in your home will also benefit one of the most stressed rivers in the world," said Rob Zimmerman, senior channel manager for Kohler Co.

By joining *Change the Course*, Kohler Co. and other sponsors seek to inspire permanent change by helping millions of people learn how their actions affect global water issues, and empower them to change the way they use, value and manage water, including upgrading their toilets, showerheads and faucets to water-efficient models that carry EPA's WaterSense label.

For each consumer who makes a pledge to reduce their water consumption by texting "KOHLER" to 771-77, or online at <http://changethecourse.us>, *Change the Course* will restore 1,000 gallons of water back into the Colorado River Basin, for example by helping local farmers irrigate more efficiently.

Silestone Celebrates 25th Anniversary

Cantoria, Spain — To commemorate Silestone's 25th anniversary, the Cosentino Group held an event at its Cantoria, Spain headquarters on February 26. During the festivities, Cosentino's founders, the executive board and a group of employees celebrated 25 years of Silestone's history, and special recognition was awarded to approximately 60 people who have been involved with the brand since its launch. The kickoff celebration is the first in a series of commemorative initiatives that will take place throughout 2015, including an expanded product warranty, new product introductions, designer collaborations and strategic partnerships, and a commemorative logo.

"Reaching Silestone's 25th Anniversary is a significant milestone, and there is no better way to celebrate the brand's success than by thanking all of those who have supported us since the very beginning," said Eduardo Cosentino, CEO of Cosentino North America. "As a family owned company, Silestone represents our foray into the American market and has allowed us to become a household name around the world. We look forward to continuing this tradition and expanding our product lines through innovation for years to come."



Francisco Martinez-Cosentino, chairman of Cosentino, speaks to those assembled at Cosentino's anniversary celebration for Silestone.

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InSinkErator Honors PWB Members

Racine, WI — InSinkErator and the National Association of Home Builders' Professional Women in Building Council recognized members at this year's International Builders' Show in Las Vegas for outstanding work with their local councils. The awards ceremony was held during the 60th annual PWB Spike Club Reception.

The PWB Spike Program provides recognition for member recruiters whose efforts throughout the year bring in new members to the Council and its affiliates. PWB welcomed new councils in 2014, and membership ranks grew by 10%, making PWB the fastest growing council within NAHB.

The Council – which is comprised of professional builders, remodelers, contractors and architects – honors members who exceed annual recruitment goals. Members receive scholarships their local council can award to students pursuing careers in the building industry. InSinkErator has served as the exclusive sponsor of the PWB Spike Reception and the scholarships given at this event for more than three decades.

"We value our long-standing relationship with the Council and remain committed to helping support women's progression in this field," said Rob Grim, senior v.p. of sales at InSinkErator. "These inspiring professionals make a commitment every day to help grow tomorrow's leaders."

The 2014 PWB Council Chair Carol Morgan presented the Bob Cox Professional Women in Building Spike of the Nation Awards to Carole Jones of the Home Builders Association of Southeastern Michigan PWB, who recruited 15 new members and re-signed 21 current members in 2014.

The following regional award winners were recognized for increasing membership in their local councils, and each received a scholarship and a recognition pin:

- » Northeast Region A: Cheryl Boyd of the Rhode Island Builders' Association PWB;
- » Southeast Region B: Nicole Goolsby of the Lake Norman HBA PWB;
- » Midwest Region C: Karen Schroeder of the PWB of Greater Lansing Michigan HBA;
- » Midwest, Mid-South and Texas Region D: Angela Cassidy of the HBA of St. Louis-Eastern Missouri PWB;

» American West Region E: Terri Everhart of the Building Industry Association PWB.

The Women in Building Spike Rookies of the Year awards recog-

nize members who immediately become active recruiters in their first year. Karen Schroeder of the HBA of Greater Lansing PWB was honored for recruiting 16 new members in less

than one year. In the small council size category, Michelle Null of the Greater Southwest Illinois PWB was recognized for recruiting eight new members.

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Circle No. 9 on Product Card

Appointments

Wichita, KS-based **Custom Cupboards** has promoted its president, **Mael Hernandez**, to CEO/president.



The **National Association of Home Builders**, based in Washington, DC,

has promoted **Lakisha Woods**, CAE, to chief marketing officer.

Monroe, WA-based **Canyon Creek Cabinet Co.** has reorganized the management structure of its manufacturing plant and has appointed **Jim Evans** as pre-finish manager

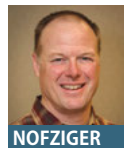
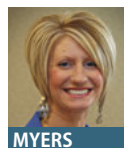


and **Carlos Christiansen** as pre-finish supervisor. The company has also announced several personnel changes: **Robert Foote** has been named executive v.p.; **Jeff Meehan** has been appointed to the sales management

team, and **Rick Lovorn** has been named v.p. of operations to lead the company's manufacturing. In addition, **Shaun Loewen** has been appointed to the Canyon Creek's sales team in Canada, where he will represent the company in British Columbia, Alberta and Saskatchewan.

Frank Juranich has been named chief operating officer of Queens, NY-based **Nemo Tile**.

New York, NY-based **Laufen** welcomes **Nazneen Ahmed** as global projects manager of the company's Global Projects Team.



Showplace Wood Products, based in Harrisburg, SD, has announced a number of promotions: **Lisa Myers** to marketing services manager; **Gareth Wyatt** to director of human resources; **Bill Allen** to director of manufacturing; **Matt Nofziger** to materials manager, and **Matt Koziara** to customer relations manager. In addition, **Lori Seykora** has been named director of product development.

Rick Tarantino has been promoted to president and COO of Carson, CA-based **Water, Inc.**

LG Electronics USA, in Englewood Cliffs, NJ, has named **John Riddle** senior v.p. of sales for Home Appliances.



ROHL, based in Irvine, CA, has named **Tracy Haugh** director of marketing. In related news, **Balfrey & Johnston** has been chosen as the company's manufacturer representative in Michigan.



Gary Pember has been named v.p. of marketing for Perrysville, OH-based **Mansfield Plumbing Products**.



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BLANCO

Montreal, Quebec, Canada-based **WETSTYLE** has appointed **Yan Belval** plant manager & director of production, and **Marco St.-Pierre** senior director of sales & business development.



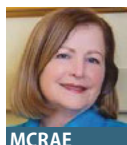
CARNEVALE

David Carnevale of Carnevale & Lohr Inc. has joined the Oberlin, OH-based **Marble Institute of America's** executive committee and will serve as the 2015 board treasurer.



HUNTER

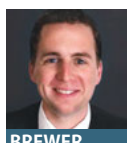
MaxLite, based in West Caldwell, NJ, has appointed **Jim Hunter** senior v.p. of sales and marketing.



MCRAE

Laurie McRae, NCIDQ, ASID, IIDA, AKBD, RID #489, has begun serving as the president of the Board of Directors for the Washington, DC-based **Council for Interior Design Qualifications**. The organization oversees the development and administration of the NCIDQ examination. McRae is president of Laurie McRae Interiors in Augusta, GA.

Des Plaines, IL-based **Geberit** has named **Oben Sales** as its representative for the Geberit Residential Products line in Arizona and Clark County, NV.



BREWER



KRANTZ



ODEIDE



JOHNSON

The American Society of Interior Designers (ASID), based in Washington, DC, has added four new members to its senior leadership team: **Jim Brewer**, v.p. of Government and Public Affairs; **David Krantz**, v.p. of Research and Knowledge Management; **Olga Odeide**, director of Industry Partnerships, and **DJ Johnson**, director of Chapter Program Development.

LATICRETE, based in Bethany, CT, has announced a number of personnel changes. The company has promoted: **Ranen Beaver** to senior technical service representative for the company's Specialty Products business unit; **Timothy Bergin** to associate technical services manager – Support Services; **Dean Cunningham** to

associate technical services manager – Specialty Products Division, and **Steven Rampino** to associate technical services manager – Training. **Ryan Blair** has also been appointed product manager. **Lori Cloat** and **Lori Carriello** have joined the company's Tile & Stone Installation and Care Systems business

unit as distributor sales representatives. **Steve Butkovich** has also joined LATICRETE as regional sales manager.

Nashville, TN-based **Coyote Outdoor Living** has partnered with Hawaii-based wholesaler **Servco Pacific** to display the company's products at

Servco Pacific dealers in Hawaii and the South Pacific.

GRAFF, based in Milwaukee, WI, has partnered with **Level 5 Sales and Marketing** to continue GRAFF's market growth in southern California and Hawaii.



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Circle No. 11 on Product Card



Neuromarketing Offers Tips to Impact Decision Making

By understanding how the 'old brain' works and what it responds to, you can better craft successful kitchen and bath presentations.

Whether your prospect is 30 or 50, each has an old brain. And that old brain is in charge of making all buying decisions, so it's essential to understand how it works.

There are three distinct parts of the brain, as Patrick Renvoisé and Christophe Morin explain in their book *Neuromarketing*. The new brain is responsible for thinking; the middle brain, for feeling. But it's the old brain that combines information from the new and middle brain, and says "yes" or "no."

The old brain, the authors note, is the primitive "fight or flight" area of the brain and is concerned with just one thing: survival. "Researchers have demonstrated that human beings make decisions in an emotional manner and then justify them rationally," Renvoisé and Morin write. "Furthermore, we now know that the final decision is made by the old brain."

STIMULI FOR THE OLD BRAIN

Fortunately neuroscientists have also discovered that the old brain responds to six very specific stimuli. Keep them in mind as you interact with a prospective client.

First, the old brain is totally self-centered, since its job is to ensure survival and wellbeing. That means the old brain won't listen to anything that doesn't apply directly to it. If your prospects have told you they are interested in a butcher block countertop, talk to them about types of wood tops. Don't talk about granite;

they won't hear you. If they believe they want a kitchen table, don't show them pictures of islands; they won't register. This doesn't mean you can't make alternative suggestions, but frame them so they're in the customer's self-interest. "I know you like butcher block because of the wood grain, but before you decide you might want to also look at this tile with a wood grain like butcher block."

Second, because the old brain is always on the lookout, it is sensitive to contrast. Which explains the power of before/after photos. Always take before shots, and use them in all of your marketing communications. "Contrast allows the old brain to make quick, risk-free decisions," the authors say. "Without contrast, the old brain is confused, which can mean a delayed decision or no decision at all."

Third, the old brain requires tangible input. That's because the old brain is looking for something familiar, friendly and concrete that can be recognized quickly.

"The old brain cannot process concepts like a 'flexible solution' or an 'integrated approach' without a lot of effort and skepticism," according to the authors. So rather than "creative design solutions," talk about concrete advantages such as "on time, on budget kitchen and bath remodeling." Or "designs that make the best use of space."

Fourth, the old brain remembers the beginning and the end, but not the middle.

Place the most important content at the beginning of

your presentation, Web site or brochure, and then repeat it at the end.

Fifth, the old brain is visual. The optical nerve is physically connected to the old brain and is 25 times faster than the auditory nerve, so use plenty of pictures in all of your presentations and marketing materials. Investing in quality photography will pay off big time.

Finally, the old brain is strongly triggered by emotion. "Neuroscience has clearly demonstrated that emotional reactions create chemical events in the brain that directly impact the way you process and memorize information," say Renvoisé

and Morin. But why? What is the pain behind the small kitchen? Perhaps they just remarried and now have a blended family, and the small kitchen prohibits this new family from having room to bond.

Because the old brain is self centered and concerned with its survival, it is highly interested in solutions that will alleviate pain. Be sure you formulate your solution to ease their pain. "We can open up your kitchen and have enough room so that all of the kids can sit at the counter at one time."

Once you know their pain, you can differentiate your claims. Forget the

The most effective way to demonstrate gain is through stories. That's why testimonials are so important. Ideally they should be videos, and they should be very specific. Solicit testimonials that address common points of pain.

"I was really concerned about the mess of a remodel. But Joe's guys put down plastic over the hall carpet, and cleaned up every night before they left." "I was really worried about having enough room for all my baking stuff since I was moving from a home into a condo. But Jane measured it all and planned great storage. Everything fits and is easy to reach."

"With strong stories, visual proof of your solutions that address their 'points of pain' and concrete reasons why you are different, the old brain is more likely to respond with a 'yes.'"

and Morin. You have to understand the emotional needs behind a new kitchen or bath, which can often be triggered by lifestyle events.

SELLING TO THE OLD BRAIN

Given these stimuli, here's how the authors recommend selling to the old brain:

- » Diagnose the prospect's pain;
- » Differentiate your claims;
- » Demonstrate the gain your solution provides.

The key to diagnosing your prospect's pain is to ask lots of open-ended questions and really listen to the answers. For example, your prospects may want a big-

hackneyed, "We're the leading kitchen and bath dealer in our town." The old brain will ignore this. It wants contrast, as in, "We're the only dealer in town with three certified kitchen designers." "We're the only showroom offering the original XYZ faucets from Italy." "We're the only firm with our own installers so we can control the scheduling of our jobs."

Because the old brain is especially resistant to new ideas or behaviors, you need to demonstrate, not describe, how your solution will ease the prospect's pain. The old brain needs solid proof as to how your solution will enable it to benefit.

Here is where before/after pictures come in. "This kitchen was dark and depressing just like yours, but look at it now with the new white cabinets and the bigger window, just like we're planning for you." Take before pictures that illustrate common points of pain among your prospects: dark cabinets, outdated appliances, small spaces, no countertop space, poor storage, etc.

With strong stories, visual proof of your solutions that meet their specific, individual points of pain and concrete reasons why you are different, the old brain is much more likely to respond with a "yes."

Read past columns and features and send us your comments about this article and others by logging onto our Web site: www.ForResidentialPros.com



SITTING PRETTY



This Gas on Steel Cooktop sits flush with your work surface with low, unobtrusive, cast iron trivets giving your kitchen a smooth, uncluttered look. The combination of unique design, solid brushed stainless steel and latest burner technology for precise flame control, make this cooktop pretty perfect for the uncompromising cook and your designer kitchen.

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Tips for Preventing Fraud at Your Firm

Establishing sound internal control procedures can help to prevent fraud in your business.

If you are an optimistic, positive person (which most business owners are or we wouldn't be in business for ourselves in the first place), then you probably tend to assume that the people you come into contact with largely share your own values and beliefs. As kitchen and bath firm owners, we also like to think that we are pretty good judges of character and that we can make good hiring decisions.

Trusting is great, but it's also a good idea to employ some common sense protections. So when it comes to the risks involved within small businesses, it's okay to go with our "gut," but it's equally important to make sure that we take other measures to protect our assets and reputations.

Over the years, as our companies have grown and we hired people to help us conduct our business, administrative tasks have tended to be the first ones delegated to others. There is a natural tendency for us to assume that the people we hire are honest and trustworthy; sadly, this is not always the case.

This month, we will look at some of the best ways to protect our kitchen and bath firms from the temptations and tendencies that may be present in those we hire.

HIRING PRACTICES

It's important to establish a set of procedures to be followed with all of our staffing and hiring decisions. Some of the elements that should go into this process are:

» Have every potential employee complete an application form, in their own handwriting. The form should ask for all relevant

information about the employee.

- » Have the potential employee return for two or three follow-up interviews with both yourself and some of your other staff members, preferably including one with whom the new employee will work directly.
- » Ask the tough questions, even though the wrong answer will be obvious and a less than truthful answer may be expected

» Finally, there are services that can be used to perform background checks on individuals, and utilizing these should be considered to get a more comprehensive picture.

CRITICAL PROCEDURES

Once your business has reached a point where you are adding staff, particularly for administrative positions, it's important to institute a

» The person processing invoices from suppliers for payment should not have authority to place orders with the supplier.

» Take care of the authority to make purchases on the company's behalf

» While it is convenient to provide employees with credit cards for gas purchases and materials at the local box store, such cards are an opportunity for abuse. Have employees turn in all receipts for such purchases to your accounting department and have them matched to the bills from these companies.

» Make sure you are clear with all employees who have such credit privileges what things are and are not approved purchases. For instance, is it okay to

your company is getting eight hours work for eight hours pay. Padding time cards is a common problem for small construction companies.

TRUST CAN'T BE BLIND

It is great to be trusting, but there are some common sense things that should be done to make sure you lower the risk of potential problems.

The first of these is to realize that fraud can happen to you. Most fraud actually occurs in small businesses that lack the sophistication of control procedures and ability to separate functions the way larger businesses can.

» Remember that most embezzlements occur over a long period of time with a constant stream of small amounts of money leaving the business. Over time, this can easily turn into several thousand dollars.

» Be careful of placing people with significant financial problems in positions where such fraud can occur. Otherwise honest people can be pushed over the edge by such financial pressures. It is prudent to run credit checks on potential hires who will be working in sensitive positions.

» Make sure that all employees with any kind of financial or purchasing responsibility take their annual vacations. Be leery of the "dedicated" employee who never takes a day off.

» Be particularly vigilant if your business is facing downsizing with layoffs on the horizon.

Most of us will go through our entire business careers without having to deal with a major fraud, but almost all of us will have to deal with at least some episode of employee dishonesty. Establishing sound internal control procedures before this happens is the best means to prevent having to deal with this on a regular basis.

"This month, we will look at some of the best ways to protect our kitchen and bath firms from the temptations and potentially harmful tendencies that may be present in those we hire."

regardless of the facts. Such questions might include: "Have you ever had any trouble with the law?" "Have you had any problems with drugs or alcohol?" "Is there anything we should know about you that we haven't asked?"

- » Check references carefully, including personal references and former employers. You will find many former employers are reluctant to discuss any problems that they may have had with an employee for fear of legal repercussions. In this case, you can get a telling response by asking the question: "Is this person eligible to be rehired?"

» Particularly if the potential employee will be handling cash or bank accounts, you should look carefully at the person's financial situation, i.e. bankruptcies, etc.

set of procedures that will protect your assets. You'll want to start by establishing these critical procedures.

- » Division of responsibilities
 - » Every attempt should be made to set up procedures where it would require two people colluding to remove assets inappropriately from the business. For instance, the person who reconciles the bank account should not be the same one who prepares and signs checks.

» All checks made out to the company should be stamped with a "restrictive endorsement," which requires deposit only to the company's bank account as soon as they are received.

charge a new saw to the company? How about saw blades or nails? Likewise, is it okay to charge gas if the vehicle is being used for personal use?

» If the company provides cell phones for employees, make sure that you have a policy in place for what appropriate uses of phones are. Again, someone other than one of the users should be reviewing the phone bills to watch for excessive use and unauthorized calls.

» Time is money

- » If you are paying employees by the hour, particularly if they are working in the field without supervision, you'll need to set up procedures to make sure that



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FutureHAUS Model Illustrates Kitchen Trends to Come

Despite being packed with smart and useful technology, the FutureHAUS kitchen felt normal, familiar and simple to use – which is why it is such a great, and very likely, vision of the future.

As usual, this year's KBIS offered a lot of interesting things to see on the technology front. Touch screen and connected appliances and LED lights were everywhere.

The really stand-out kitchen for me at KBIS was the Virginia Tech FutureHAUS. Tucked away in the South Hall, it looked from a distance like a semi-nondescript white glossy kitchen.

The kitchen is the vision of Joey Wheeler of Virginia Tech. With his vision and direction, he and his students came up with this very futuristic and very realistic vision of the home of the future.

MODULAR DESIGN

While it looks as if it's assembled like any other kitchen, it's actually a modular design. Each part of the kitchen, from the floor to the cabinets, is its own separate module. Plumbing and electrical are connected

the current idea where cabinetry is fitted to each job site.

SOCIAL ISLAND

I don't think I need to explain the cultural phenomenon of online life. People of all generations are now spending a lot of time on the Internet. Besides watching cat videos, they are constantly sharing information and ideas with family and friends, often via their smart phones.

To get people's faces out of their phones, the Virginia Tech team mounted a Microsoft Surface into the island top. The Surface is just a giant tablet. It's quite fantastic to use, too. You can watch videos, look at the news and bring up recipes. Instead of squinting into a phone, you



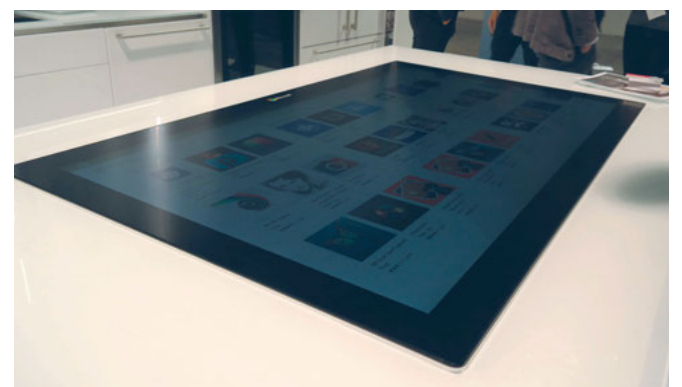
Photos: FutureHAUS



↑ This glossy white FutureHAUS kitchen hides plenty of smart features and technological extras.

← Motorized lift doors make accessing cabinet contents a breeze.

↓ In this depiction of the kitchen of the future, this surface doubles as a giant tablet.



SMART APPLIANCES

The term "smart" gets thrown around a lot: Smart Watch, Smart Car, Smart Lights, etc. But just because something has technology doesn't make it smart. I recently came across a "smart" egg tray that has bluetooth in it. That's right, an egg tray that connects to your phone to give you information about your eggs. To me, that's not a smart appliance.

The appliances in this kitchen, however, feature some pretty smart features. The oven can ask you questions via its touch screen about what you're cooking. Instead of knowing exact temperatures and times, the oven just takes care of it for you.

The kitchen also features sensors that look at how the

kitchen is performing, and it can make suggestions about how you can make your energy usage better. The microwave and oven even have cameras in them so when you're in another room, you can monitor what you're baking.

If you've ever video chatted with your parents for help on a family recipe, not only will they be able to see your face, but they can check on your oven from the other side of the world. This type of

innovation is really smart. It makes things genuinely easier, safer and more fun to use.

Another element we don't think a lot about is the pantry. Inside this pantry is a beautiful metal pantry system from Hafele. While it's great for storage, it also has a built-in UPC reader. This pantry can know what it's holding. This way it can track your purchases for you, let you know what's running low and tell you what you can cook with

Continued on page 24 ►

"The idea behind Virginia Tech's FutureHAUS is that each module can be designed and developed, and then easily installed in the field like a big Lego."

through the back with quick connectors.

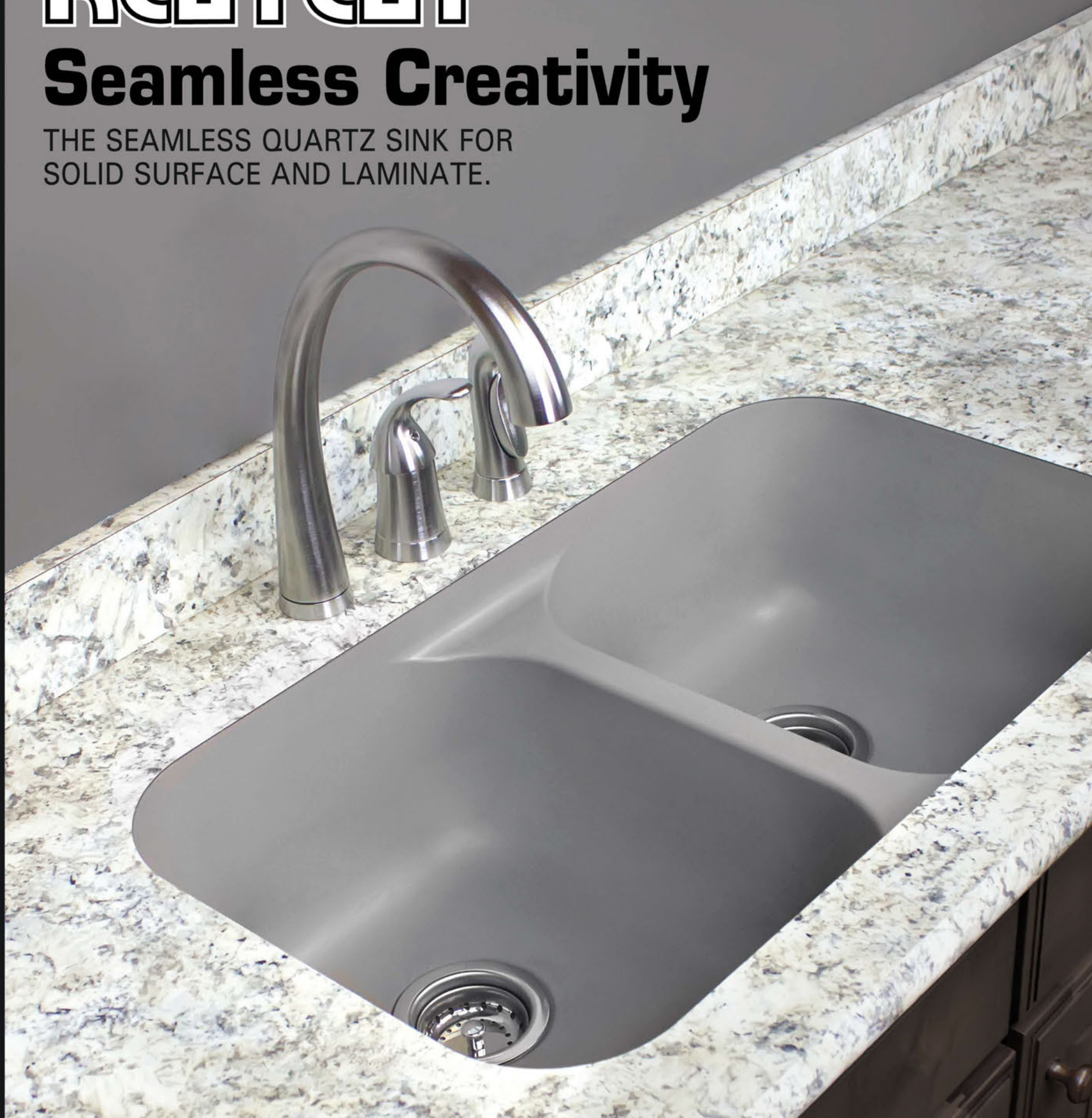
The idea here is that each module can be designed and developed, and then easily installed in the field like a big Lego set. This really bucks

can actually prepare food right on the huge tablet. This has great implications not only for the average kitchen user, but for those who see the kitchen as a social hub.

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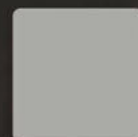
Black



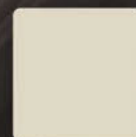
Brown



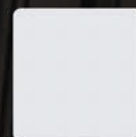
Concrete




Grey



Bisque



White

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Circle No. 14 on Product Card

the ingredients that you have on hand.

The wall cabinets feature touch-operated motorized

lift doors. If you haven't experienced these doors before, you might think they'd be a nuisance. When I first

heard of them, I pictured some mechanical sounding, slow-lift mechanism that sounds like an electric ga-

rage door. These doors were quite the opposite. With a light tap, they swung up and out of the way. If you were


running around the kitchen needing quick access to your cabinets, this would work fantastically well. This is a great example of seamless and styled technology.

The backsplash was a huge bank of televisions. They could be used to put a background on, like your latest vacation pictures or a nice picture of the beach. They could also be used to monitor your appliances, read recipes or even have a video chat. Imagine all of the things you could have on your computer or tablet screen – they could all happen here, instead of having to mount a laptop somewhere in the kitchen. And, with them turned off, you could barely tell they were there.

I think a lot of us picture the kitchen of the future as something out of the Jetsons: talking robot servants and odd appliances with mechanical arms that can shake up a cocktail for you. These types of visions of the future put all of the technology in your face and make it the central point of the kitchen.

If you look back at history, when the first "Radar Range" came out, it was a big deal if you had one. It featured a bold and futuristic design. If you walked into a kitchen that had one, that's all you saw. Today, microwaves are quietly built into kitchens as a seamless part of the cooking experience.

I think the FutureHAUS accomplishes two very important things very well. It took the kitchen a huge step forward in terms of technology. And it also didn't lose sight of how we use things now.

The kitchen also paid attention to history, and how new technology will eventually get blended into your daily use. Aside from its white modern appearance, at first glance and use, the FutureHAUS kitchen felt normal and familiar. Even though it's packed with technology, it's simple to use. That is why it's a great and very likely a vision of the future. 

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By Kim Berndtson

Family-Friendly Design Elements Define Kitchen

This family oriented couple needed a cooking/eating space that supports daily living for four while also accommodating in-kitchen seating for entertaining large groups of visitors.

TRI-LEVEL SOFFIT

Gracefully curves throughout the kitchen, adding a 'fun' element to the space

BAKING CENTER

'Window' opens to the living room for watching young kids while a floating shelf corrals baking supplies, leaving the entire countertop as workspace

LARGE ISLAND

Provides in-kitchen seating for frequent family gatherings with as many as 14 guests

Photos: Carlos Aristizabal

Nothing heavy. This two-word request guided much of the design for this contemporary kitchen that showcases casual elegance, “floating elements” and clean lines with an emphasis on family-friendly design. Indeed, the design had to be adaptable enough to easily accommodate two children under the age of four as well as large groups of family members who are frequent visitors to the Port St. Lucie, FL home.

“These clients are incredibly family oriented,” says Tashia Rahl, designer/partner at Premium Kitchens, in Boca Raton, FL, who led the design. The husband, a music connoisseur and doctor, and his wife, a stay-at-home mom who adores baking with her young children – and who also managed the construction of their new home – both stressed the need for a space that would provide adequate seating for the family and storage for entertaining lots of guests. “They all love to eat in the kitchen, so the island needed to accommodate as many as 14 people!” says Rahl.

Anchoring the center of the space, the 11’ island features Italian cabinetry – including Avana dark chocolate laminate cabinets with integrated stainless hardware that supports the contemporary vibe – that is set against contrasting White Zeus Silestone quartz countertops from Cosentino. The multi-level surface features a lowered “kids table” accented with chrome legs that easily accommodates five youngsters seated on miniature bar stools.

Above the island, a row of five sleek pendant lights is suspended

from a tri-level soffit. Accented with LED strip lights, the soffit curves gracefully throughout the kitchen. “It’s so Dr. Seuss...in an elegant way,” says Rahl.

Rahl adds, “She is one of the most fun people I’ve met, and she wanted her kitchen to be fun, too. This soffit is so fabulous and it really sets apart the kitchen while giving her a peaceful sanctuary for cooking and eating. Initially, she wanted a lot of elements like this soffit, but I encouraged her to let the one element ‘speak.’ It’s a similar thought process to a crazy photo with a simple frame. She already had a lot going on in the kitchen, including the two tones of cabinetry, so it was important to stabilize the space and let the soffit do the talking.”

PERIMETER SUPPORT

The kitchen’s perimeter also features an abundance of design elements that support daily living and family entertaining. Providing plenty of storage, dark cabinetry from the island is repeated around the perimeter and accented with an occasional contrast of high-gloss white lacquer cabinets, one of which features glass that reveals a glimpse of the homeowner’s collection of vintage white cake plates.

A large 64” Frigidaire refrigerator, two Miele dishwashers, two Wolf ovens and a Wolf undercounter microwave drawer – which the kids love to use – fulfill food prep and storage requirements. A small broom closet on the side of the pantry, and near the patio entrance that leads to a private beach, provides storage and quick access



PERIMETER SUPPORT

The kitchen’s perimeter features an abundance of design elements that support daily living and family entertaining. Walls are lined with dark chocolate cabinets that provide plenty of storage. They are accented with an occasional contrast of high-gloss white lacquer cabinets, one of which offers a peek at the homeowner’s collection of vintage white cake plates. A small broom closet on the side of the pantry, and near the patio entrance that leads to a private beach, provides storage and quick access to flip flops, etc. A shallow shelving unit, accented with a unique herringbone laminate, offers a place to display special items.

A large 64” Frigidaire refrigerator, two Miele dishwashers, two Wolf ovens and a Wolf undercounter microwave drawer fulfill food prep and storage requirements.


to flip flops, etc. A shallow shelving unit, accented with a unique herringbone laminate, offers a place to display special items.

A Thermador cooktop anchors one corner and sits atop a graciously curved white lacquer cabinet and underneath a Falmec white glass ventilation hood. “She thinks the hoods looks angelic,” notes Rahl, who adds that she eliminated the typical backsplash, as well as mouldings, to maintain a clean look.

Pop-up outlets fit flush with the drywall and countertops to further preserve the sleek, contemporary look. “Adding more details to the walls would make it less of a sanctuary, and would be too much for the eye to handle,” she says.

Sliding windows above the sink, which is accented with Franke faucets, allow easy access to the patio on the other side. “[With the new design], she always cooks with the windows open!” adds Rahl.

Initially the homeowner wanted her cooktop next to the ovens, but in the end, the designer convinced her to move it to the corner. This change improved functionality and gave her the ability to add an opening, or ‘window,’ that looks into the living room. “The kids often play in the living room and with the window, she can be in the kitchen and still watch over them,” Rahl says.

To further enhance efficiency of the space, the designer added a floating shelf underneath the opening, supported by contemporary console brackets from Italy. “She uses that shelf more than anything else in the kitchen!” says Rahl. “When she bakes, she can put her supplies on the shelf and still have the entire countertop as work space. Sometimes it’s the little things in life that make you the happiest!” 



IN THE DETAILS

A Thermador cooktop anchors one corner of the kitchen’s perimeter and sits atop a graciously curved white lacquer cabinet and underneath a stunning Falmec white glass ventilation hood. ‘She thinks the hoods looks angelic,’ notes Rahl. Initially the homeowner wanted her cooktop next to the ovens, but in the end, the designer convinced her to move it to the corner to improve functionality. Now when she cooks, she can either look outside to the patio and beach or into the living room where her kids are playing.

Above the island, a row of five sleek pendant lights is suspended from a tri-level soffit that flows graciously throughout the kitchen. ‘This soffit is so fabulous and it really sets apart the kitchen while giving her a peaceful sanctuary for cooking and eating,’ says Rahl.

By Andrea Girolamo

High-End Design Firm Makes Artistic Spaces a Family Affair

The Salerno family has a flair for dramatic spaces. Whether it's a sweeping traditional kitchen, a warm, nature-inspired transitional bath or a modern open-plan family room, the firm's signature detailed style is on full display.

Peter Salerno, CMKBD, who founded his kitchen and bath design business, Peter Salerno, Inc. in Wyckoff, NJ in 1997, began his career in the industry a decade earlier working with his father Ross.

"I always wanted to be an artist growing up. Now I use those skills every day as I sketch renderings in front of my clients as we discuss their wants so they can see my vision. Kitchens and baths have become my art form. Growing up in the industry and working in my father's cabinet factory has been invaluable in selecting the cabinet lines I work with. Quality is everything to me, and I bring that to my clients."

When his children, Anthony and Gabrielle, showed interest in the family business, Salerno happily brought them into the fold.

"Clients love that we have family working together," he says. "There is a comfort level for them knowing, at any given time, they can reach 'a Salerno' on the phone to answer a question."

FAMILY GATHERING

Anthony Salerno, like his father, started out with artistic ambitions.

"I studied filmmaking and photography in college, took classes in metalworking and worked as an electrician throughout school." He says this eclectic background has served him well in his professional life, bringing those skills to flesh out Salerno, Inc.'s social media and Web presence. "[I] create videos for our Web site, our blog, www.PeterSalernoBlog.com, and YouTube, which enables us to present our latest projects to the public in a new and exciting way."

Anthony has also brought his metalworking and electrical experience into his kitchen designs. "I have found ways to incorporate metal panels into cabinet design for a unique look. My experience in the electrical field has merged nicely with fiber optic design for countertops



Photos: Peter Rymwid

The Salerno family has three generations of kitchen and bath professionals. Pictured (left to right) are Peter, Ross and Anthony. They stand in a Salerno-designed kitchen that placed second in the Large Bath category in the 2015 National Kitchen & Bath Association Design Competition.

and vanities, as well as lighting plans."

For his part, Peter says that his first priority in bringing his children into the industry was to start them on the right track with kitchen and bath education, as he did when his career was young.

"I took my NKBA certification classes in the late '80s and early '90s, and it helped tremendously in establishing my reputation. I later went on to achieve my Master certification to separate myself from the pack," he says. "When my son Anthony and daughter Gabrielle joined my business, the goal was simple: Get them into 'the system' as soon as possible – we've found NKBA University's courses to be incredibly valuable, both from

a business/professional development standpoint and to get them on the road to their certifications. In order to excel in this industry, a designer needs a sound foundation, the NKBA U courses and quality on-the-job training. It's that easy."

The rewards of working with family are numerous, says Peter. "I get to see my family every day. Watching them learn and grow into talented designers and business people is extraordinary for me."

The challenges of working with family are solved by creating an atmosphere of mutual responsibility and respect, he explains. "The greatest challenge of a family business is to understand that when you come through the door, you

need to work as a team. It's not Dad, Mom, big brother and little sister; we are coworkers with specific jobs that are to be respected. That respect extends to the rest of the staff, as well. "

A 'MINI A&D BUILDING'

A key part of Peter Salerno's design philosophy is a willingness and drive toward reinvention.

"The most important factor in designing and selling kitchen and bath projects today is being different. As a designer, you need to always think out of the box. How are you separating yourself from the pack? If you are using different materials, colors and styles than your competitors, that is when you have an edge; otherwise you are just the same as everyone else (boring!)."

This extends into the firm's new design center, which was named Most Innovative Small Showroom in the U.S. at the 2015 Kitchen & Bath Industry Show. Seeking to create a comprehensive space to display the products they most often work with, Peter says the showroom really sets the firm apart from its competitors, and has gone over big with clients.

"We created a 'mini A&D building,' he says, referencing the Architects & Designers building in New York City's Upper East Side neighborhood. "We can take them to the tile store next door for the flooring and backsplash selections, and then on to the appliance store two doors down where they can look at high-end appliances and test the newest coffee makers or steam ovens. We can have everything selected in an afternoon to make the most of our clients' time. They love it."

He says the high-end nature of the products his company specifies are a big part of what sets the firm apart.

"Our cabinets are solid wood and plywoods with a 5/4"-thick door and solid walnut drawers, all custom-made to our specifications in the U.S. The countertops are all very unique; we have concrete, stainless steel, glass, marble, limestone, wood and quartz. The appliances are all top of the line – La Cornue, Wolf/Sub-Zero, Miele and Top Brewer."



The Salernos identify their client base as detail-loving homeowners who appreciate multi-textured spaces, as seen in the kitchen above and the bathroom at right.

Salerno, Inc. offers CAD drawings for elevations and floor plans, allowing the firm to present clients' projects in 3-D on a big-screen television. The designers pair this with hand renderings of each project to present a complete picture of the work ahead, which Peter says is "a wonderful marriage of high tech and Old World presentation."

AN UPSCALE CLIENTELE

Peter Salerno notes that the company's clientele is most often a person who "appreciates high-end design and Old World craftsmanship."

"We specialize in detail – whether it's a classic aesthetic with a unique

reclaimed tin hood and hand-carved mullion doors, or a transitional kitchen using pure white cabinets, glass tile backsplashes and a sleek glass/stainless hood," he continues. "Our projects are geared to fit each client's lifestyle and decorating preference, be that ultra modern, rustic or classic."

The company's design philosophy of looking to artwork, sculpture, period furniture and architecture for inspiration has led the father and son designers to work on dozens of out-of-the-box designs.

Anthony Salerno says one of his most unique projects involved a client




who came to him looking for a unique master bath design.

"I used reclaimed tin from a speak-easy in Chicago once owned by Al Capone," he explains. "When the client saw the beauty of the tin and heard the story behind it, it became the focal point of her bathroom. The vanity became a piece of furniture and a rare gem in her home."

When pressed for his favorite project, Peter recalls a kitchen with a number of offbeat star-studded pedigrees.

"One of my favorite kitchens was in a mansion owned by Joseph Kennedy where Gloria Swanson resided in the 1930s," he says. "The client found a gorgeous stained glass ceiling that came from a 13th century European castle. The glass was backlit and placed over a large hand-painted island, creating a truly unique focal point. The kitchen cabinets were created with the same attention to detail that the 13th century ceiling possessed. To use such an antique as a focal point inside a mansion with such history made for an exciting project."

The Salernos describe their company culture as forever encouraging reinvention and fearless design. As for their business philosophy, Peter calls it simple.

"Be passionate about the kitchen and bath industry. You need to love to create beautiful projects for your clients. If you can achieve that, you will never have to worry about having enough work," he concludes. 

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The Multi-Taskers

Readers of a certain age may remember a 1970s Saturday Night Live sketch featuring a faux advertisement for Shimmer. Shimmer was a fictitious – thank goodness! – floor wax/dessert topping. While that sounds completely unappetizing, albeit hilarious, the public's appetite for multi-tasking products has not diminished over the decades.

The digital age has ushered in even more products that do double duty in the kitchen and bath, mainly to take advantage of smart phone and tablet features. Whether you welcome these trends or steer your clients as far as possible from them, it's important to appreciate their appeal for certain market segments.

PROS AND CONS

There are some definite advantages in some of the multi-taskers to your design projects. They can cut an overall appliance budget by combining multiple functions in one purchase, (e.g., a combined microwave-convection-speed-cook oven-warmer rather than a separate oven, microwave and warming drawer). This has appeal for the budget-conscious client.

They can also save space, as in the enhanced microwave example, which could appeal to your small kitchen client. Connected appliances will resonate with the connected homeowner and early adopter.

Multi-taskers, both connected and not, come with some drawbacks. When one part of a multi-tasker goes

Photo: TopBrewer/Purcell Murray



out, chances are, the entire appliance does, too, multiplying the inconvenience. They're more complex, which could lead to more issues, higher repair costs and fewer skilled repair professionals to fix them.

They also tend to cost more than their basic equivalent – e.g., a microwave oven with convection will cost more than one without, and one with convection, speed-cook and warming features will cost significantly more than one with just convection. Some clients may push back against the greater cost if they just want a microwave.

From a design and installation perspective, the more a fixture or appliance does, the longer it takes to digest the specifications and the more complex those specs will be. For example, a standard fixture doesn't care about your wifi network, but a multi-tasking connected one does. Being a designer gets more technical every year.

MULTI-TASKERS IN THE KITCHEN

Some of these have become workhorses over the years. The microwave with convection, speed-cook and warming settings is a popular choice. Combi-ovens with convection and steam settings are increasingly growing in popularity as homeowners discover the benefits of steam cooking.

What's next in this category – already seen at European shows – is the built-in combi oven that features steam, convection and microwave

Photo: LG Hausys Surfaces



- ➡ **TopBrewer is barista, soda jerk and milkman all in one.**
- ⬆️ **First residential blast chiller freezes, defrosts and cooks dinner.**
- ⬅️ **Durable quartz tops now double as charging stations.**

technology. At least two brands are working on getting the combination tweaked for the U.S. market. (Sharp released a countertop model with this capability, but there needs to be a built-in option for the higher-end client.)

Also on the appliance front is multi-tasking refrigeration. The convertible fridge-freezer-wine drawer is not new, though there are now offerings from more than one manufacturer, and in more than one configuration. What is new is a refrigerator that also dispenses coffee and other hot beverages. GE introduced its Cafe Refrigerator at Design & Construction Week 2015 that will appeal to the Keurig fan; owners can make coffee from their favorite K Cups in this new appliance.

Several brands have shown off fixtures that blend water filtration and hot water dispensing. This is a boon for the sink area, which can now benefit from both without having multiple units to dispense them. Rohl and InSinkErator are two brands that have displayed these multi-tasking features and have upped the style quotient on

both filtered and hot water dispensers. You no longer have to choose between form and function.

Affluent coffee fans can also multi-task with TopBrewer, a versatile beverage dispenser that makes java, as well as tea, hot water, sodas and milk drinks. It, too, ties into a smart phone and an app to dispense a client's liquid pleasure.

Freddy is another high-end multi-tasking kitchen appliance. It made its official debut at the WestEdge show in 2014, but is just now shipping to the U.S. This premium Italian product is a blast chiller to fast-freeze meats and leftovers. It will also defrost and slow cook meals. Blast chillers have been a commercial kitchen staple for decades. The affluent home chef can now also enjoy their convenience.

Solid surface countertops that double as wireless charging stations for smart phones and tablets have been featured at recent KBIS halls. This year, the technology expanded to the quartz segment with Viatera's TechTop from LG Hausys, which took best of overall show honors.

Photo: Irinox



Photo: Bosch Home Appliances

⬆️ **Convection and steam are a dynamic cooking duo.**

Expect to see more of these in coming years as clients continue to use their devices in the kitchen and as ever-bigger apps demand even more power. Providing it conveniently and attractively is one of the many demands of the kitchen designer today. This multi-tasker can definitely help and its availability in quartz is definitely welcome.

MULTI-TASKERS IN THE BATHROOM

Multi-taskers have made their way into our most private spaces, too, as we take our tablets and smart phones there with us. Kohler introduced and has expanded its popular Moxie line of showerheads that stream Bluetooth along with water. Broan Nu-Tone is streaming Bluetooth via its new bathroom vent fan.

Televisions, safes and charging stations made their way into Roborn's medicine cabinets several years ago. Now your medicine cabinet can also play your device via Bluetooth. That innovation is expected to expand beyond one or two offerings, depending on their popularity. TVs and Bluetooth speakers are also available in mirrors without cabinets. Lookingglass Mirror TV is a San Diego-based brand that customizes mirrors for clients wanting

Photo: Kohler Co

↑ **Moxie rain showerhead doubles as a Bluetooth speaker.**

↓ **Multi-tasking medicine cabinets charge phones, play TV and more.**

Photo: Roborn



one, the other or both. The firm will even convert a local client's existing framed mirror to a TV-ready model.

On the less technical, but extremely important end, Moen and Delta Faucet Co. both offer a series of multi-tasking accessories with built-in grab



Photo: Brizo

← **This showerhead doubles as stationary and hand-held.**

↓ **Bath accessories with grab bars multi-task stylishly and safely.**

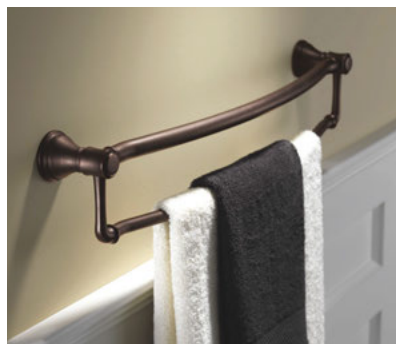


Photo: Delta Faucet Co.



Photo: Lookingglass Mirror TV

↑ **A mirror can also be a TV and Bluetooth speaker.**

bars. These enable you to add safety features to storage elements such as towel bars and shelves. Rohl also has

a grab bar that doubles as a hand-held shower slide. Both Brizo and Delta are offering two-in-one hand-held/fixed showerheads.

As the population ages, look for more brands to come up with stylish ways to add aging-in-place features to the bath, sometimes in tandem with other products.

LAST WORDS

You may be one of those designers who prefer simplicity to complexity in the products you specify. You probably value simplicity in your professional life, too. Regardless, it's important to identify which elements of this trend best meet your client needs, and advise them on the pros and cons.

It's also important to have a candid conversation with your general contractor about the added complexity of the multi-tasking products you're specifying. They will probably add time to the job and that's crucial for a GC to know when bidding. **KE**

Jamie Gold, CKD, CAPS is an independent designer in San Diego, the author of New Kitchen Ideas That Work and upcoming New Bath Idea Book (Taunton Press), and a blogger, design journalist, seminar developer and industry consultant.

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THE *International* VIEW

The recent whirlwind of international design shows provide inspiration for creating kitchen and bath spaces that distill clients' dream visions into reality.

The beginning of each New Year is an exciting time for designers interested in "what's trending" in style and home décor fashion. Major domestic and international exhibitions fill our January calendar: the Kitchen & Bath Industry Show in Las Vegas, The LivingKitchen in Cologne, Germany, the Maison & Objet Show in Paris and the Toronto Interior Design Show. Color companies release the "Color of the Year." Manufacturers launch new products, new styles and new innovations.

In addition to aesthetic updates, market research information is released in the media. In the first quarter of this year, many sources have commented on the changing de-

mographics of our 2015+ client. Our major industry publications are reporting on specific product launches.

Let's have fun and focus on the look of the new rooms we will create this year! The foundation of the new style of these spaces is found in the shifting preferences of our clients, as they relate to how such rooms "feel." To be successful, design professionals must distill such dreamed visions into the reality of an actual room with specific products. For that reason, I will concentrate on the "feel" of a new kitchen or bath in this article – and then challenge myself and my colleagues to search out the needed details to create the "real" rooms inspired by imagined spaces.

DEFINING CONTEMPORARY

Let's start with a perplexing question: What does the client really mean by "Contemporary" design?

For the past three years, Contemporary design has been reported as growing in popularity. However, the definition of Contemporary is quite elusive. At a recent meeting, one designer said it well when she commented her clients might really be requesting a very traditional Shaker-styled room when they use the word "Contemporary." What they really want is a classic space – just more edited. She commented that what they really meant is they want to "close off, tuck away, put away, give away." Such de-cluttering leads to "contemporizing" any space in their mind!



Photo: Courtesy LivingKitchen Exhibition, Cologne Germany Press Office, 2015



Photo: Courtesy LivingKitchen Exhibition, Cologne Germany Press Office, 2015

↑ In an exhibit at the Cologne LivingKitchen Fair, both smooth and rusticated finishes are combined. Wood is mixed with a gray solid material on the back wall. The island echoes the wood, then introduces a lighter textured surface on the cabinetry. An interesting display!

← A Contemporary kitchen has an Old World, rustic feel because of the rough-sawn look of the wood cabinetry.

→ In an elegant Transitional bathroom, an old repurposed entry door adds depth and texture to the room.

neither the streamlined, minimalistic look oftentimes called “Euro Styling,” nor highly detailed Traditional rooms. While we all have been honing our design expertise in creating Transitional rooms (a more tailored Traditional room), the concept of Modern Traditional is intriguing.

As designer Alexandria Knight of Korts & Knight suggests: “As a designer, I don’t want to be limited. I try to incorporate textures, curves and bas-relief doors into our designs. I also try to introduce an eclectic mix of materials, like metal and glass, as well as more interesting structural elements. By paying close attention to these principles, I am able to create more fully developed kitchen plans – no more boring kitchens.”

In an October, 2014 *Traditional Home* article, Mick de Giulio of de Giulio Kitchen Design echoed the designer’s comments when he said: “Minimalism is going away – people want simple, but not stiff and architectural. The kitchen is just as functional as before, but people want kitchens that speak to them emotionally. Thirty years ago, people were looking at catalog brands of cabinetry to define



Photo: Courtesy Real Sliding Hardware, www.realslidinghardware.com, and Start at the Curb

their kitchen, today they’re open to doing a kitchen that’s very unique – and just reflecting the client’s unique personality.”

This new definition of Modern Traditional is seen in rustic Contemporary-themed rooms that feature a clean, simple cabinet layout, but may also feature a very distressed wood finish on the exterior surfaces – spaces that mix old objects with new materials or feature accents from the industrial world.

COLOR TRENDS

When it comes to design trends that will impact our work, there are several forecast trends worth looking at. First, it’s always interesting to see what’s new from the color world. This past January, with the help of my intern, Mary Slusser from the Philadelphia Art Institute, I researched the color world, studying

color palettes and predictions from 10 companies and four color associations. While we’ve all read that Pantone suggested the new “Color of the Year” was Marsala, let me go beyond this one revelation!

An interesting color introduction that I saw in the 2014 San Francisco Showhouse, created by Sarah Reep’s team at KraftMaid, was cabinetry in the new tone of “beautiful black.” Black was introduced in several of the international exhibitions in January, 2015 as well. Black makes a strong, sleek statement. It’s pretty dramatic, but not to be overlooked for the client who is looking for that something very special.

Returning to the world of color experts, after looking at all the palettes available from all of the companies, I found the following common color palettes across all paint brands and color organizations.

Such a comment is a good place to start, because it reminds us to thoroughly gather information in our early meetings with clients, so the vision they have in their mind results in real-world environments they will enjoy living in. Use your portfolio, Web sites of respected manufacturers or the photo collection the consumer brings to you so that the images define the style terms they use.

Next, let’s recognize an evolving “bridge” between Contemporary and Traditional styling that I’ve seen here in North America and Europe.

In a recent Houzz report on design trends for 2015, the interesting term, “Modern Traditional,” was used. The concept makes sense: Clients want

Photo: The Formica Laminate Jonathan Adler Collection, Formica Corp., www.formica.com



↑ At the 2015 Kitchen & Bath Industry Show in Las Vegas, Formica teamed up with iconic potter, designer and author Jonathan Adler to create a collection of new laminate patterns. The colors are decidedly Mid-Century Modern.

→ A very naturalistic color palette is seen in the cabinetry, barn door and upholstered pieces. The horizontal pattern in the door is repeated in the island end panels and back wall.

» The impact of global experiences has resulted in palettes of unrestrained, complex combinations of patterns and materials, partnered with bold hues. Somewhat impulsive and undisciplined in nature: Colors seem to know no convention, as unexpected partnering happens in the “melting pot of imagination.” Non-traditional groupings of textures, finishes, shapes, patterns and forms comfortably share the same space in these non-conventional rooms.

Keep an eye on the travel-inspired tones that are reflected in this color palette. Color tones seem to be shifting to echo the diversity of our population: inspired by rich, bold Moroccan and Native American palettes, as well as the geometry and pattern-on-pattern oftentimes seen in the Asian design community.

» A sense of optimism as the U.S. economy emerges from the recession has resulted in clear, bright color palettes. A feeling of good

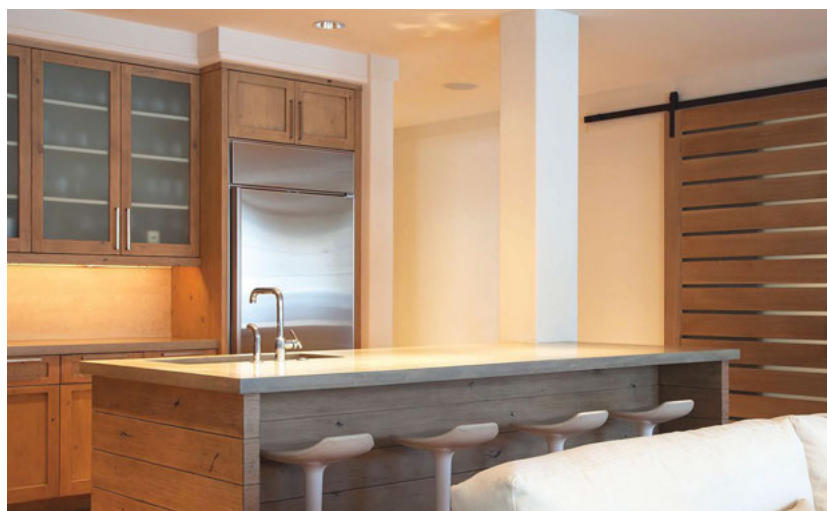


Photo: Real Sliding Hardware, www.realslidinghardware.com, and Ramsay Solutions Inc., www.ramsaysolutions.net

spirits and a positive outlook for the future is reflected in colors that focus on Mid-Century Modern design, presented in imaginative, clear, bright colors influenced by pastel post-war hues. The colors are supported in room settings featuring 1950s-styled flash-back furnishings, fabrics and accessories from the post-war period, yet are presented in a fresh and new way – just right for loft living and Jetson-styled high-tech gadgetry.

» There is a continued interest in the beauty and refinement of the past, resulting in rich jewel tones set in elegant surroundings. Vintage romance and nostalgia for times past are reflected in palettes featuring oil-paint tones, reminiscent of old master paint-

ings. Colors are rich: They seem darkened with the patina of age and accented by opulence. These palettes offer an invitation to step away from the noise of today's technology to enjoy the order and elegance of experiences and relationships from the past.

» There is a clear design desire to create restful, calming rooms by developing palettes that reconnect with nature, while being 'present' in a thoughtful 'right now' moment. Palettes combine materials and colors that provide harmony between the man-made and the natural environment. This palette emphasizes a deep respect for both the simplicity seen in nature, and the strikingly textured complexity of the natural world around us.



Photo: Häfele America Co, www.hafele.com/us; designed and manufactured by Michael Bright, Bright Wood Works, www.brightwoodworks.com

So, how can you use this information in your work – right now? If you operate in a showroom environment, take a look at all of your displays. Can you make minor changes to reflect these palettes? Perhaps wall covering or backsplash changes, or maybe new light fixtures? Certainly, new accessories! Try to have these different palette categories reflected in the various rooms you present to the consumer.

If you do not work in a showroom environment, can you organize your portfolio to reflect these palettes in photographs of kitchens and bathrooms? Alternatively, simply research the color companies and organize some of their predetermined palettes in a way that you can share them with the consumer.

THE CELEBRATION OF 'HAND-MADE'

A second major trend I see throughout the international community of design is the celebration of “hand-made.” Even when an object is mass produced, designers are striving to present the object or a setting that could be categorized as a singular theme with all items made by hand. The goal seems to be to marry craft and industry.

This interest in the “hand-made” is repeatedly introduced through the use of textured and tactile materials. We have all seen natural marble, granite and quartz in honed finishes – that is just one example. More rustic finishes on wood cabinetry throughout the kitchen or as accent pieces will continue to be of interest to consumers.

Reviewing the presentations made at the Salone del Mobile Milano EuroCucina exhibition in April of 2014 and the January, 2015 LivingKitchen Fair in Cologne, Germany, this interest in organic, expressively Contempo-



← A beautiful kitchen display at the 2015 KBIS featured solid matte cabinetry surfaces combined with almost construction-grade, naturally finished wood drawer fronts, creating a beautiful horizontal stripe throughout the cabinetry. Note the curved shape of the cabinetry end panels and its intersection at the thin countertops: a beautifully executed space!

↓ A very functional pass-through countertop separates the kitchen from an adjacent living space. Beautifully detailed custom glass doors on an overhead sliding system provide a design element when open, and privacy when closed. This is an excellent example of a highly personalized space.



Photo: Real Sliding Hardware, www.realslidinghardware.com and REcreateNW, www.recreatenw.com

rary – that enjoys a touch of nostalgia or vintage here or there – seems to be growing in popularity across the globe. European Contemporary kitchens featured such craftsmanship, typically seen in a special cabinet or in a weathered wood countertop in a room otherwise filled with smoothly finished cabinetry.

Many settings showcased wood veneers that had rusticated finishes, such as wire brushing or other design effects to add texture. One European manufacturer featured a room created by a Japanese architect, which had a decidedly “complex simplicity” design aesthetic.

AN APPRECIATION FOR OPULENCE

A third trend (that makes me smile) is the definite appreciation for opulence. This was particularly noticeable at the 2015 Toronto Interior Design Show and the Paris Maison & Objet Show.

Interior designers, often in the accessories displayed, celebrated the power of sparkle. Mixed metals or crystal chandeliers in pared-down Modern environments, for example.

At the Paris show, accessory bowls were carved from a single slab of Italian marble. This might have been seen in Paris as an accessory, but think of all the beautiful vessel bowls that are now available. Sometimes, our practical nature gets the best of us – we worry about the special faucetry needed, the maintenance of the countertop and other functional and maintenance concerns. However, we may be working with a client who just wants to exuberantly have fun in their powder room or master suite with a spectacularly carved, painted or glazed lavatory bowl and a very special faucet.

While I believe we will continue to see silver, chrome and stainless as three metallics used consistently

in the kitchen – warmer metals such as gold, copper and bronze are being launched in decorative hardware, light fixtures, appliance accent strips, chair detailing and accessory highlights. Move beyond brushed nickel!

Another interesting thing I have seen lately is a movement away from all metals in a kitchen or bathroom matching one another. Mixing matte and gloss finishes, mixing a bronzy gold at the island sink while polished nickel is featured elsewhere injects energy and “vibe” into a kitchen.

Interestingly enough, in tandem with the products introduced in Paris, I saw some elegant, whimsical, beauti-

fully detailed crystal cabinet hardware at KBIS. I urge all designers to revisit their hardware sources – and take a look at several new ones – searching for very special crystal hardware for luxurious bathroom settings.

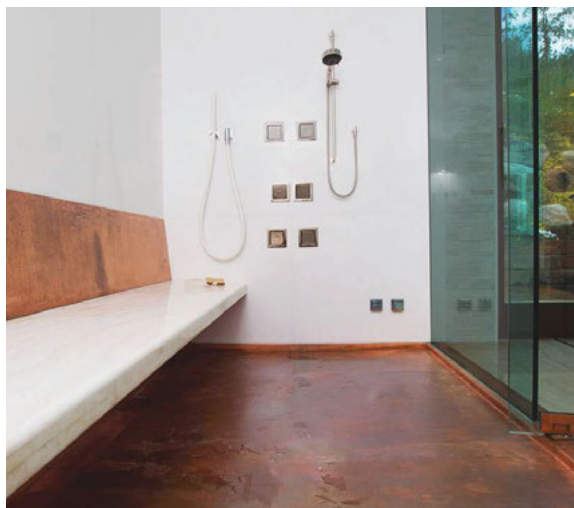
THE EXPANSION OF MID-CENTURY MODERN

Mid-Century designs continue to be popular, resulting in a series of reissues from noted industrial and interior designers as far as furniture. These pieces gained recognition in the 1950s – that is why it is called “Mid-Century Modern.”

However, the author of a recent article in *Metropolis* suggests we should embrace the aesthetic as a style not aligned to a time period, stating, “Mid-Century Modern no longer simply refers to a static period in time. Today, it is a design theory – a discipline that is no longer tied to the 20th Century post World War II design world. It is a theme that uses man-made products, beautifully sculpted woods, vibrant colors – all set in a setting with quietly restrained decoration.”

DETAILS TO CONSIDER

» **Wallpaper that wows.** I have been watching this reemergence of wallpaper for several years. In Houzz’s “Trend Watch: 13 Kitchen Looks Expected to be Big in 2015” by Houzz Contributor Natasha Sorca, wallpaper was again highlighted. A popular installation is to feature over-scaled, heroic wallcoverings



↔ ↑ New, intriguing uses of metals are seen in these two bathrooms created by Diamond Spas. The shower pan is fabricated in stainless steel in one example, and copper in the other. Copper and stainless steel are appropriate for such a surface because of their durability and hygienic properties. A beautiful surface to consider in a very personal bathroom.

Photo: Courtesy Diamond Spas, www.diamondspas.com; Interior Designer: Linda Schutt; Photo: Brent Bingham, www.brentbinghamphoto.com

Photo: Courtesy Diamond Spas, www.diamondspas.com; photography by Brent Bingham, www.brentbinghamphoto.com

Designer's Notebook

➔ A beautiful display at KBIS featured classically painted white cabinetry, combined with a very rusticated finish on the island cabinetry, as well as the island wood countertop. The hood echoes the wood finish: a beautiful room.

⬇ An interesting corridor kitchen from the Cologne LivingKitchen Furniture Fair provides needed storage in the tall pantry section.



Photo: Plato Woodwork, www.platowoodwork.com

Photo: Courtesy LivingKitchen Exhibition, Cologne Germany Press Office, 2015



in one area of the room: a “feature wall,” if you will, as opposed to creating a “focal point” with cabinetry within the overall environment. Providing a similar sense of style, bigger patterned ceramic tiles are also key design elements in modern spaces.

» **No/few wall cabinets!** Not news to us, we know – what to do? Add pantries into your designs! I think we will continue to see large walk-in pantries providing the needed storage shelving in many kitchens in 2015.

» **An open, airy sense to the space; oftentimes, created by incorporating open shelving within the room.** The designer’s challenge is how to make these shelves appear to “float” on the wall surface. A popular hanging system uses dowels or brackets that are attached to wall studs and concealed behind drywall. The support then slips into a channel or hole built into the back of the shelving. A key concern is the maximum weight these shelf systems can carry. I also think the wall space behind the shelving provides both a design challenge and opportunity for the planner. We need to think beyond traditional backsplash materials or applications. The cabinet material may become the wall covering, or this area may be just the spot for a grand tile or wallcovering pattern.

» **The continuing trend of mixing furniture-type cabinet pieces into both Traditional and Contemporary spaces.** Oftentimes, mixing

in the opposite style creates a dramatic, eclectic, welcoming environment. Think French armoire freestanding furniture piece in a room filled with highly lacquered full-overlay cabinets! Or, traditional white painted cabinets combined with a brushed wood finish on the island.

» **More attention paid to the architecture of the room.** This is going to have a big impact on kitchen designers. As kitchens become integrated into overall living areas, we can no longer focus our attention on the set of cabinets we provide. The cabinet part of the kitchen plan cannot sit against barren walls. Today, designers are paying more attention to the architectural accoutrements – the interior finishing systems, if you will – comprising of door casings, baseboards, crown molding and ceiling treatments.

With LED lighting systems becoming such an integrated part of our business, I believe that the ability to create tray or coffered ceilings – and illuminating them – can add to the drama of the spaces we work in. By the way, even in a simple kitchen with an 8-ft. ceiling, extending a flat molding onto the ceiling creates the sense of a tray: a great visual “trick of the eye.”

Around the world, the new approach to modern rooms is resulting in spaces that are much more humanized and unpretentious than the classic Contemporary interiors that in the past seemed to be all about the design, rather than the family. We are being asked to create rooms focused




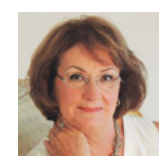
Photo: Courtesy Toronto Interior Design Show Press Office, 2015

⬆ The 2015 Toronto Interior Design Show featured whimsical, interesting exhibits. Talk about personalized – a bicycle suspended over an island! Attending these various trade fairs – both internationally and domestically – always results in new, inspiring ideas.

on providing a highly personal mix of beautifully designed products – yet, in a simple, pared-down fashion. The consumer believes that this focus on simplicity will make the room easy to live in and manage.

This double request for organization and simplicity adds a new layer of responsibility to professional designers: They must create an overall storage system and manage the envelope of space allotted for the kitchen or bathroom so that it effortlessly manages the family’s possessions, and can support the various activities that will take place in that space. We can meet this challenge by focusing on the family first: how they live in the space, what materials appeal to them and

what possessions they love and hope to highlight in the new room! Then, we simply transition our professional emphasis to finding the right elements to build a “real” room! 



Ellen Cheever, CMKBD, ASID, CAPS, is a well-known author, designer, speaker and marketing specialist.

A member of the NKBA Hall of Fame, Cheever gained prominence in the industry early on as the author of two design education textbooks. She manages an award-winning design firm, Ellen Cheever & Associates, and has been part of the management team of several major cabinet companies.

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HOT BUTTONS

Kitchen and bath consumers are making clear choices when it comes to the products they want most, and those that they're willing to pay for, a *KBDN* market study reveals.

Today's kitchen and bath consumers are very clear about the products and design features they deem as "must-haves," and are all too willing to splurge in order to make their dream projects a reality.

That's the key finding of a major new market research study conducted exclusively for *Kitchen & Bath Design News* by the Charlotte, NC-based Research Institute for Cooking & Kitchen Intelligence (RICKI). The online survey, conducted in February among 315 kitchen/bath dealers and designers, was aimed at pinpointing what consumers want most in their kitchens and baths, and what they're most willing to spend money on (see **related Consumer Buying Trends, Page 8; Editorial, Page 5**).

According to the survey's findings, nearly nine in 10 (87%) surveyed designers and dealers say full-extension drawers are essential to clients in the kitchens they design and sell. The top "must haves" for the kitchen also include trash/recycling bins, a kitchen island, deep drawers, more accessible storage, custom or semi-custom cabinets, LED lighting and a range hood that is separate from a microwave (see **Graph 1**).

The survey also found that kitchen clients are more readily willing to splurge on a number of key products, particularly countertops, with more than two-thirds of surveyed designers and dealers reporting their clients "frequently" splurge on countertops (see **Graph 2**).

Islands, cabinets, refrigerators, and cooking appliances are also products for which clients tend to cough up more money, with nearly all designers and dealers in the survey

telling RICKI that their clients splurge either "frequently" or "occasionally" on these items.

The RICKI survey also found that, when budget-conscious clients take the plunge and spend more on certain kitchen products, they in turn tend to compensate by spending less on other products, most notably automated or "smart features" and decorative hardware.

Designers and dealers working with each generation say Baby Boomers are most likely to frequently splurge on their kitchen projects, followed by Gen X clients.

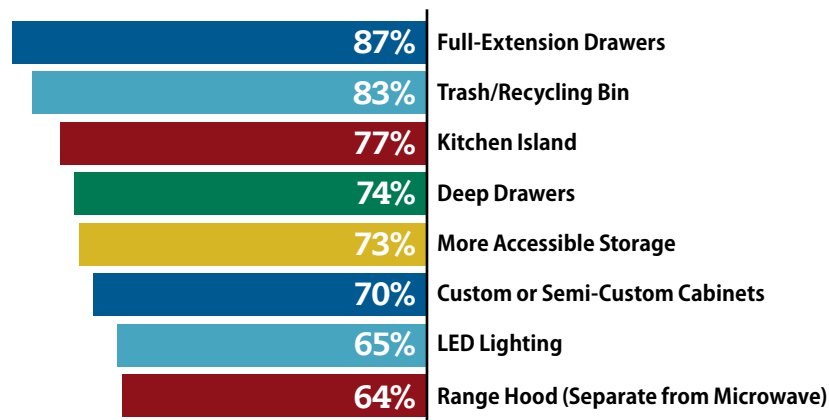
The survey also found that women are much more likely than their male counterparts to splurge on eight kitchen products: decorative hardware, accessible storage features, sinks, dishwashers, countertops, faucets, cabinetry and cooking appliances. In contrast, men are far more likely than women to splurge on smart features.

Almost all of the surveyed designers and dealers do kitchen projects

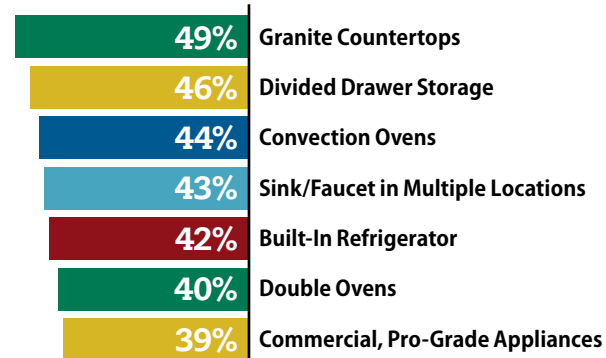
1 Kitchen 'Must-Haves'

% of Survey Respondents Reporting 'Yes' About Their Clients

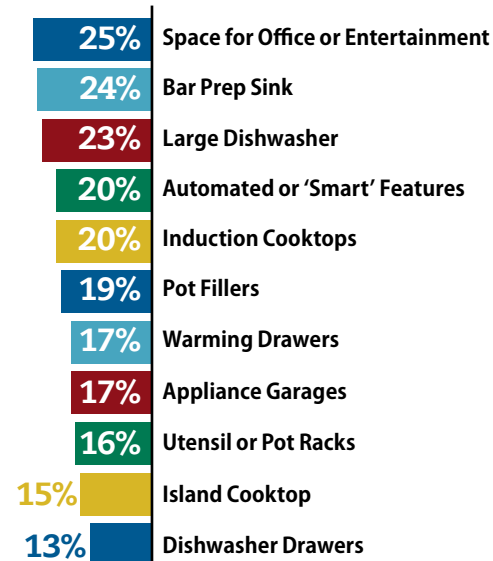
TOP TIER



SECOND TIER

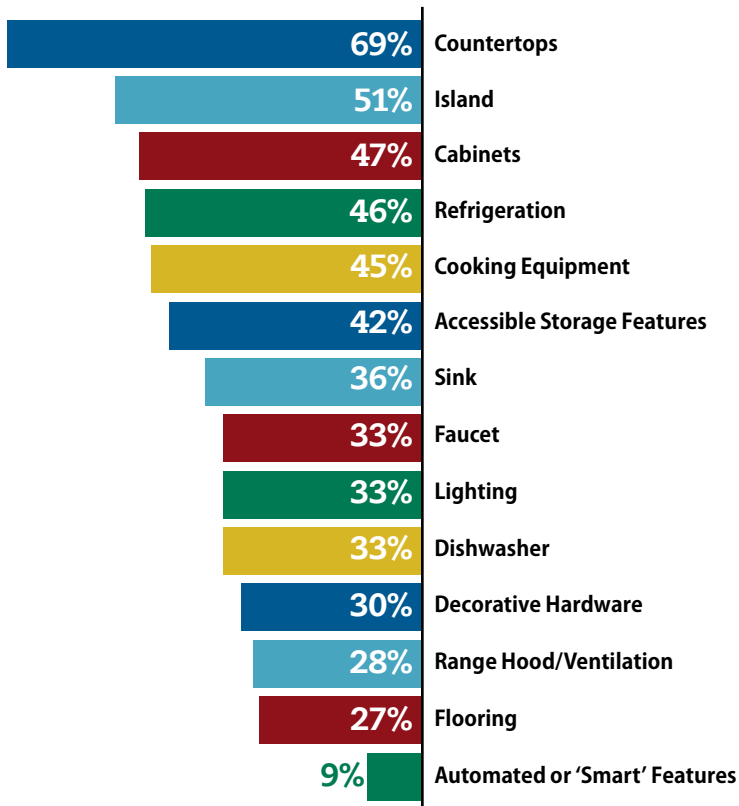


THIRD TIER



2 Kitchen Products on Which Consumers are Most Likely to Splurge

% of Survey Respondents Reporting Clients Splurge Frequently



with a client mix that includes Gen X, Gen Y, Baby Boomers and Matures. Designers and dealers working with each generation say Baby Boomers are most likely to frequently splurge on their kitchen projects, followed by Gen X clients. Gen Y clients are thought to be least likely to splurge.

Women are much more likely to splurge on tubs, storage features and vanities than men. In contrast, men are significantly more likely than women to splurge on shower systems.

When it comes to the bathroom, more than two-thirds of surveyed designers and dealers say his-and-hers vanities are most essential to clients in the projects they design and sell.

The top "must haves" for the bath also include water-saving showerheads/toilets, customized storage, radiant heated floors, natural stone countertops, rainfall showerheads and furniture-style vanities (see Graph 3).

As is the case with kitchens, clients splurge more on countertops than on any other bathroom feature, with half the surveyed dealers and designers reporting that their clients "frequently" splurge on countertops (see Graph 4).

Vanities, faucets, tubs, shower systems, storage features and flooring are also key products when it comes to bathroom splurging – with at least four in five dealers and designers saying their clients splurge either "frequently" or "occasionally" on these items.

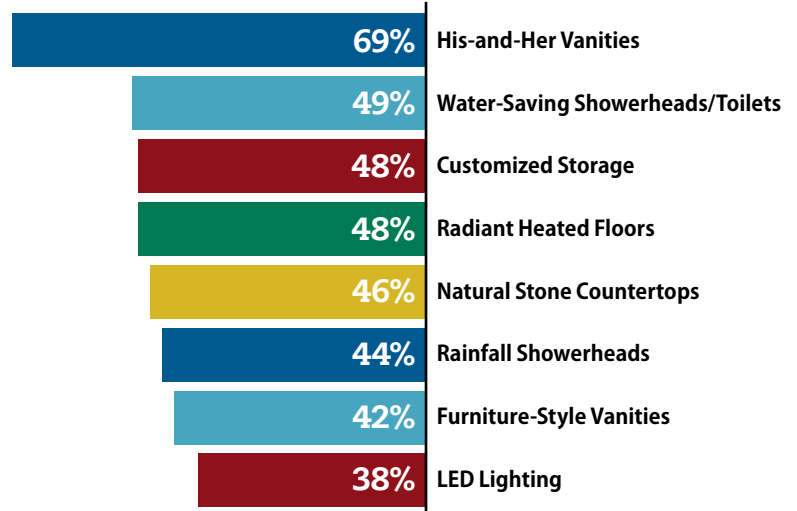
When budget-conscious clients do splurge in the bathroom, they tend to compensate by spending less on other products (toilets and shower systems in particular). Women are much more likely to splurge on tubs, storage features and vanities than men. In contrast, men are significantly more likely than women to splurge on shower systems.

Among those designers and dealers working with each generation, they say Baby Boomers are most likely to splurge on their bath projects and Gen Y clients are least likely to splurge.

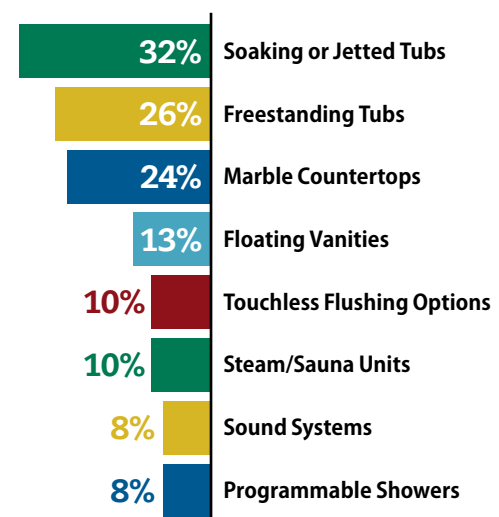
3 Bathroom 'Must-Haves'

% of Survey Respondents Reporting 'Yes' About Their Clients

TOP TIER

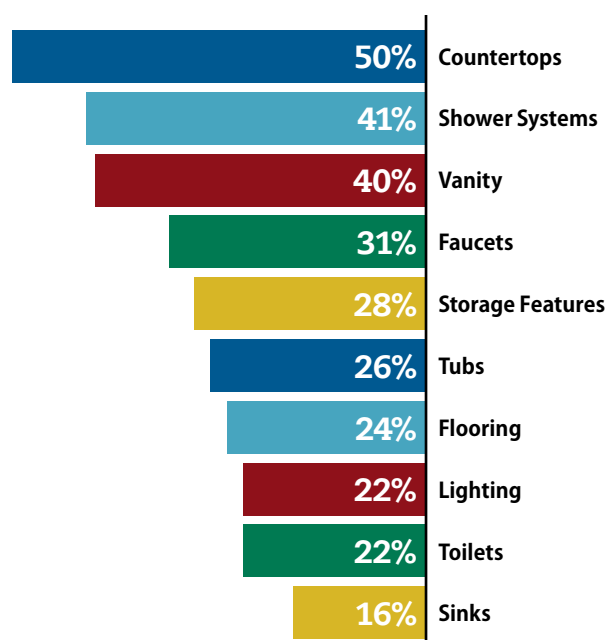


SECOND TIER



4 Bathroom Products on Which Consumers are Most Likely to Splurge

% of Survey Respondents Reporting Clients Splurge Frequently



Source: Research Institute for Cooking & Kitchen Intelligence (RICKI)



Luxury Impresses in Small Kitchens

While not necessarily luxurious in square footage, these smaller kitchens feature designer creativity and plenty of luxury touches.

Mention the words ‘luxury kitchen’ and the phrase may conjure up pricey appliances, posh tile and expensive countertop materials, set amidst an enormously vast expanse that vaguely resembles a place where people might actually cook.

However, when *KBDN* asked several designers about how they creatively add luxury to kitchens on the smaller end of the square-foot spectrum, conversations moved beyond simply throwing a bunch of high-priced products into a plan and calling it a day.

DEFINING LUXURY

Certainly high-end products and design elements can elevate a space,

especially when you consider how something like a built-in appliance or handmade tile makes a space look and feel. Admittedly, these are a good place to begin a discussion about luxury.

“We define luxury design by products that offer professional performance, or materials that heighten the experience of the space, whether functional or aesthetic,” offers Christy Bowen, CKD, CBD, Twelve Stones Design, in Austin, TX. She often collaborates with design/build firm Realty Restoration, LLC and remodelers/architects David Davison and Christopher Davison to implement her designs.

“A standard refrigerator will keep items cold, but a built-in model not

only gives the user a more efficiently designed space, but the aesthetics are superior as well,” adds Christine Ramaekers, CKD/v.p., MainStreet Design Build, in Birmingham, MI.

But that is just a place to start, they stress. “Luxury in a home is the ability to design a space that exceeds a person’s needs,” Ramaekers continues. “A luxurious renovation adds detail that an average home just doesn’t have. Higher-end cabinetry has more select wood species with richer finishes and more details with added accessories – such as cutlery dividers and pull-outs – that make a kitchen useful. It’s also about honing in on a client’s style, then finding one key item to create an interesting focal point such as a fan-

◀ Lighting was important in this kitchen designed by Christine Ramaekers. Not only did she focus on illuminating work spaces, but she also included decorative pendants and recessed lights inside several cabinets. Another luxurious touch is the granite island countertop, which features a leathered finish for a 'soft' touch. Ramaekers focused on including just one focal point, which is the range wall. 'Make one key item pop,' she says. 'We didn't have a long run of countertop and the range space was tight. We wanted to give it a more open feel, so we added tall cabinets to each side, then added a dramatic match-stick glass backsplash. Great installers are also key to any luxury design, especially when you talk about tile like we used in this kitchen. Our installer brought the glass tile into the window bump out and every single piece is matched, hand cut and filed to give it a soft curve as it goes around the corner.'

tastic hood or farm sink. Beyond one or two super cool items, everything else needs to be finished really well... great crown moulding details, great finishes on an island, etc. so you can appreciate the focal point."

Other designers agree. "I think luxury is about seeing something unexpected," says Priscilla Crother, ASID, PKBP and owner of Lifestyle Kitchens by The Kitchen Lady, in San Juan Capistrano, CA. "It's about doing something well. It's about meeting clients and listening to them to understand what they want."

"I talked to some designers about this topic the other night," she continues. "One of them said it's about what you don't notice that makes something luxurious. I thought that was very insightful, because if something is designed very well, all the proportions and color balance are correct and everything feels perfect, even though you may not be able to pinpoint exactly why. Incorporating good use of basic design elements – like balance, symmetry and a focal point – is very important since these will enhance the space. One of my favorite luxury elements is simply having a design theme. Luxury design isn't about including a bunch of expensive products. An expensive range can look out of place if the scale is wrong, the color is wrong or the style is wrong."

"Luxury is, as they say, in the eye of the beholder," adds Antoinette Fraser, founder of St. Clair Kitchen & Home, in South Orange, NJ. "For me, it's the moment when all of the elements of a design align to represent something extraordinary."

Gerry Bross, co-owner/general manager of Hollywood Sierra Kitchens, in Los Angeles, CA, actually bristles a bit when asked about luxury. "It's a term I don't really like because it's been so overused," he explains. "As a kid, luxury would have been something like rich leather in a Chrysler Cordoba...an elegant touch. But now, it's also about durability...not necessarily in a way that something is well made, rather that something is long lasting aesthetically. There isn't nec-

essarily a monetary amount attached to it. I think we should stop thinking of luxury as expensive and fussy and look at it as something that makes someone feel good...something they are willing to do for themselves because they're worth it!"

For Richard Winslow, of Winslow Kitchen Studio, in Hilton Head Island, SC, luxury is more than skin deep. "It could be said that luxury means ornate or extravagant," he says. "However, I feel it means the convenient use of interior space through the integration of accessories such as servo drives on much-used cabinetry like waste receptacles, sink drawers, wall lift-up doors, etc. Exterior spaces can also have added luxury through the use of operable columns, pilasters, trim, glass door cabinets and special finishes including distressing, milk paint, glazes and specialty colors."

IMPLEMENTING LUXURY

With all that being said, how do designers add their interpretation of luxury to a kitchen?

Color and finishes are a great way to make a small space feel luxurious, says Bross. "We've done some very small kitchens, and one thing we usually stay away from is white," he notes. "We look toward interesting

Photo: Bethany Nauert



⬆ In this Hollywood loft apartment, Gerry Bross reinvented the kitchen to be suitable for today's living while relating to the early 20th Century building in which it is located. 'We added timeless inset cabinetry, white paint – which is popular now, but also befits the time this building was constructed – latch hardware and crown moulding on top of crown moulding to accentuate the high ceiling. We also gave the cabinetry a level of detail that one would have expected from the early 1900s. While it has an older style, it is quite custom and beautiful...and made to look like it has always been there. We also added reclaimed brick to a portion of one wall because everyone expects there to be exposed brick in an old building...plus, it's beautiful!'

wood tones and species as well as different sheens or a great paint color. Then we might add something like a quartzite countertop, or since it's a small kitchen, why not get a slab or a half slab of something that's really cool? For cabinetry, we might add some great hardware. For a backsplash, make it dynamic. We have a tile distributor who offers artisan-made tiles. She has great products from all over the world that can really wake up a tiny space."

Bowen likes to focus on the unusual as well. "Small spaces are great places to splurge on exotic stones, laser-cut tiles or unique lighting fixtures," she says. "They help make a 'big' impact in a little space. I always try to include at least one 'wow' factor in any design. Sometimes the splurge is on a dazzling backsplash or breath-

taking light fixture, other times it's a unique or exotic finish."

Fraser, Ramaekers, Winslow and Crother also mention lighting – everything from interior and undercabinet LEDs to spectacular pendants and light bars for drawers, blind corners and pantries – as a way to add a luxurious touch, with Crother candidly remarking, "If you can't see it, it doesn't matter!"

Luxurious lighting in a small space is especially worthy, adds Ramaekers. "It seems like a small space would be easy to illuminate," she says. "But you might not have the advantage of large windows or multiple entries, so adding luxury lighting is key. I sometimes even add it inside cabinets without glass doors."

Luxury can have a practical side as well, notes Bowen. "Because small



Photo: Peter Rymwid

◀ The decision to treat this tiny kitchen like a butler's pantry was pivotal to its design, notes Antoinette Fraser, who indicates that its footprint is about the same size as a butler's pantry. A tone-on-tone color scheme includes white cabinetry, Carrara marble countertops and white subway tile that combine Hollywood Regency and Baroque in a design that makes the kitchen feel as if it has been there forever. But personal accessories, such as the collection of fish plates – which are displayed in cabinets with mullion glass doors and glass shelves – urns and orchids add the special touches of luxury, as do the chandelier, black and white honeycomb tiled floor and bridge faucet.

Small Kitchen Inspirations

↓ In this kitchen, Priscilla Crother's client was looking for something exceptional to entertain in, and to show off some of her collections. Visitors are immediately drawn to the custom, hand painted tile and beautiful recessed inset above the Italian range and beneath its matching hood. But much of the space's luxury comes from the extensive planning that was done with every detail, including how the Calcutta marble on the raised countertop was cut to coordinate with the soapstone countertops; to the walnut rivets added to the floor; to the location of the bay window where the couple drinks their morning coffee; to the layered lighting; to the three peninsulas that create an inviting space where family and friends can enjoy the design elements from any point in the kitchen, or can join in the conversation but not be in the way of the cook; to the design of the cabinetry, including its color, hardware, hinges, etc.



Photo: Vincent Ivcevic, VI Photography & Design



Photo: Christopher Davison, AIA

↑ This 200-square-foot kitchen starts with luxury products such as a Thermador Pro cooking suite, exotic Blue Calcutta marble and a glass mosaic backsplash. 'These are the wow factors,' she says. 'The blue marble grounds the space with an unexpected twist on the usual white marble. Its highly polished blue field and white veining resemble a negative image that demands a double-take when anyone enters the space.' A multi-layered, color-corrected lighting plan also plays a critical role in elevating the design. 'The layers of light are key to this design,' she says. 'Lighting plays a role in reflecting the true colors of the materials. This gorgeous blue marble could have easily looked gray if the proper attention had not been paid to the color temperature of the lamps or to the placement of the fixtures.'

kitchens lack size, it's important to make the space uber functional," she explains. "Aside from opulent finishes, luxury can include clever storage or multipurpose fixtures, such as a sink with multiple tiers and accessories. Likewise, interior cabinet pull-outs and organizers help cooks quickly find items they use all the time. Several high-end appliance manufacturers have also introduced speed convection ovens that double as a microwave and/or convection oven. They are amazing space savers and deliver gourmet cooking results."

Winslow loves 'hidden' gems as well. "Servo drives on the most-used cabinetry for one-touch operation is a special luxury," he says. "I also love pantries with soft open and close operation and easy adjustability for shelving. This is even better when used with a pocket door for full three-side access. One latch allows the shelves to move up or down easily. I also love blind corner accessories because less space is wasted and it gives clear access to items. Sink drawers are also more convenient for effortlessly bringing out storage space to the user."

WORTH THE EFFORT

While luxury can be a bit of a moving target, and while it may seem challenging to incorporate it in small spaces, these designers agree that adding touches of luxury is worth the effort.

"Adding special touches to a small kitchen brings joy to mundane tasks," says Fraser. "In a small space we also tend to focus on function, but the form of even simple elements is what feeds the soul."

"Just because it's small doesn't mean it can't be fun," stresses Ramaekers. "You may have to think a little harder about how to create luxury, but there's a lot you can do, even in a small space."

In recent years, the kitchen has become the heart of the home and

the place where everyone gathers. "Everyone hangs out in the kitchen, even in a small one, so why not make it beautiful to encourage people to congregate...they're going to anyway!" says Bross. "And, without luxury touches, a kitchen simply vanishes."

The kitchen has also become a great place for people to really showcase their personalities. "Luxury can transform a normal, everyday room into an interesting space that becomes an extension of the home-

owner's style," says Crother. "In particular, the kitchen has become the room in the house where people can show off their individual style, wealth and creativity."

And while there might not be a luxurious amount of space to work with, adding luxury to a small space can be easier. "I would argue that it might be easier to add luxury to a small space," says Bross. "There are fewer options so it isn't as overwhelming."

In some ways, a small space might feel more luxurious just because it's more filled up, notes Crother. "I've designed big homes and little ones, and in some ways, it's nicer to do smaller homes because clients use them more," she says. "But regardless of size, luxury design requires more time and effort in terms of research and communication. And, it requires a larger budget, so it's important to discuss this ahead of time."

Bowen agrees that it can take some extra thought, but is not impossible. "Luxury can be incorporated into any space," she says. "It really just depends on what the client deems 'luxury.' For example, if a massive commercial range is high on a client's priority list, it might be challenging to accommodate the scale. But, if we can find compromises or suitable alternatives to achieve their desired outcome, then it's not difficult to achieve a high-end or gourmet space." 



Photo: DC Robinson Photography

↑ Luxury is about what isn't necessarily seen at first glance in this kitchen designed by Richard Winslow. 'The use of drawers is quite nice,' he says, 'especially the use of peg drawers for dish storage, pot and pan storage, small appliances and accessories. Cutlery dividers and Servo drives are quite useful, too. But my favorite luxury is LED lighting, which is featured here as light bars to illuminate the space when the drawer is open.'



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Simply Relaxing

The home spa experience continues to trend upwards, with soaking tubs and steam showers gaining new interest.



The palette of marine paints from Sherwin-Williams can be used to brighten tubs from **Barclay Products**. The Kaleidoscope tub, shown, showcases the most requested colors for special order tubs. Circle No. 200 on Product Card

Experiencing spa-like pampering in the sanctuary of their own homes is high on the list of many homeowners, whose exceedingly busy lives beg for a place to relax. Hydrotherapy products – from jetted and soaking tubs to steam showers and sauna rooms – allow for total relaxation at the convenience of homeowners.

Relaxation doesn't look the same for everyone, however, so flexibility of products and design tops the trends list. Simplicity in both design and use is also key for today's homeowners, as are unique and customized experiences. Accessibility is also among the top and growing trends, as the age of the population and length of time people remain in their homes shift. So say manufacturers recently surveyed by *Kitchen & Bath Design News*.

"We are seeing a revival of bathing with consumers. People are recommitting themselves to bathing as a way to relax and treat themselves to in-home enjoyment," says Haley Davis, bathware product manager for Mansfield Plumbing Products, in Perrysville, OH. "The many opportunities to customize the bath experience, from whirlpool or air systems to chromatherapy mood lighting, make the in-home spa experience an achievable, enviable and enjoyable occurrence for consumers."

With time-deprived lives, a tub is a luxury, says Michael Kornowa, director of marketing for MTI Baths in Sugar Hill, GA. The tub is a place to bask in a few moments of peace and quiet every now and then, while showers are being used for daily hygiene. "People are looking not only for a customized product but a custom installation; they want to make it truly unique and truly theirs," he says.

QUIET IMMERSION

Sometimes, the experience of just immersing oneself in hot water is more relaxing than all of the added bells and whistles of therapeutic tubs. "Simple soaking tubs – non-jetted bathing – is enjoying huge popularity today," says Katrina Aure, marketing manager for Anaheim, CA-based Aquatic.

Freestanding soaking tubs are continuing to gain popularity in showrooms because of the striking look that can be achieved when making this the centerpiece of a bath, says Aure. But, in reality, smaller spaces may make that aesthetic harder to achieve. She stresses that most of the company's business still comes from drop-in tubs, where the desired look can be achieved through the deck that surrounds it.

Eric Moore, interior designer at the Kohler Design Center in Kohler, WI, concurs that current trends for tubs focus on the striking statement that freestanding baths make in the bathroom, and agrees with the issue of space constraints. "While there is a wide variety of bathroom sizes and layouts, sometimes homeowners hesitate simply for the concern of space," he remarks.

Miranda Mars, in marketing and business development for Colleyville, TX-based Clarke Products, agrees that soaker sales are on the rise, and that the demand for freestanding units has increased significantly in the past several years. "Style is a key driver, as well as different master bath combinations," she reports.

Jean-Jacques L'Henaff, v.p., design, American Standard Brands in Piscataway, NJ, adds that the demand for jetted tub and hydrotherapy products continues to decline. Several factors, including a desire for a cleaner design as well as the trend toward freestanding installations, have contributed to this trend, he reports. "As master bathrooms are becoming more common, freestanding soaking tubs are definitely the masterpiece that homeowners are seeking," L'Henaff notes.



Custom-Cut Saunas from **Finnleo Sauna & Steam** begin with custom layouts, and are personalized with a range of luxury options. For customization, options include: LED backrest or valance lighting, two-tone wood combinations, rock walls, glass fronts, sound systems, digital controls and heaters. Circle No. 201 on Product Card

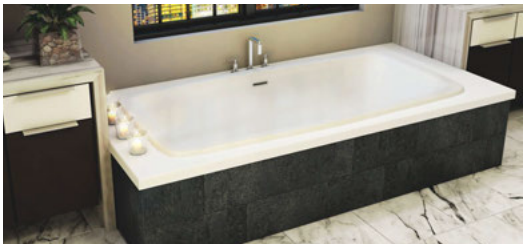


As part of **MTI Bath's** Boutique Collection, the Halo freestanding tub features a simple circular design, measuring 52"x52"x26", a relatively small footprint that consumes little floor space. A built-in seat provides added comfort, and a sizeable depth allows for submersion. The Halo is available as a soaker tub or as an air bath with 20 air jets, a heated blower and a waterproof remote control. Fashioned from MTI's proprietary Engineered Solid Stone, a non-porous mixture of natural ground materials and resin, the tub is environmentally friendly. Circle No. 202 on Product Card

The Couture Collection from **WETSTYLE** is inspired by the unique and delicate ridges found on seashells. Hand-crafted from WETMAR BiO, an eco-friendly material that is non-porous and resistant to stains, bacteria and UV rays, the tub features two asymmetrical angled slopes that mimic waves. Its thermo-insulating properties permit less energy consumption to warm bath water and provide a higher level of heat retention than traditional acrylic-based products, notes the firm. The freestanding tub is offered in True High Gloss interior and matte exterior. Circle No. 203 on Product Card



Clarke Products has recently introduced the Your Spa system, which combines both hydrotherapy and air bath features. The system is equipped with an interactive control panel for creating a personalized bathing experience. Standard features include: keypad with temperature sensor and readout on control panel, LED Chromotherapy light, multiple-speed heated blower with rheostat type control allowing for pulsating or continuous action, channel-fed air system for a gentle massage, automatic purge cycle to cleanse air channels, 9 adjustable hydro jets and 1 rotary/massage lumbar jet. Circle No. 204 on Product Card



Aquatic's Serenity 50 and Serenity 54 tubs feature a low deck height, allowing easier access for the user. The lower profile also enhances the streamlined look. The Serenity 54 features a soft rectangular exterior that transitions into an oval-shaped tub floor. Because of this transition, the walls are softened and curved for a more modern design. Circle No. 205 on Product Card



The iSteam steam shower controller from **Mr. Steam** features swipe-touch technology that controls temperature, duration, aromatherapy, chromatherapy and music. The graphic interface was designed by industrial designer David Farrage. Featuring an optional Bluetooth Audio Streaming System, iSteam pairs up to eight devices and four in-shower speakers. The unit is made from fused silica glass and polished cast aluminum, and is available in black and white finishes. Circle No. 206 on Product Card



Constructed of sandstone with rich, natural veining, the Papillon Bathtub from **Stone Forest** evokes elegance and organic simplicity. The tub features a very distinctive, free-flowing shape. Circle No. 207 on Product Card



The Brentwood Suite from **Mansfield Plumbing Products** includes a soaking tub, whirlpool and airbath, along with lavatories and toilets. Detailed beveled edges, scalloped corners and clean flat surfaces are seen in all of the suite's fixtures. New to the line is the Brentwood 3260 rectangular tub, which measures just 60"x32"x20-3/4". Circle No. 208 on Product Card

VERSATILE AND VARIABLE

In jetted systems, the ability to choose exactly the therapies desired is a huge factor, and these therapies must be flexible, adjusting to the specific user.

"Homeowners are looking more and more to new technologies in hydrotherapy that can offer unique, customized experiences," says Moore. In the past, spouses with different preferences might not end up having an ideal experience. "Being able to now offer our combination hydrotherapy baths is really opening the doors to new and unique bathing experiences," he says. This might include a whirlpool with the company's Bask heated surface technology, or Bask along with its VibrAcoustic technology, which integrates music and vibrations into the tub.

Davis notes that there is a demand for adjustable jets that allow for the different needs of the bathers, from deep hydro massage to a soothing, relaxing flow like that offered by the company's Swirl-Way Venturi jet. "Features such as inline water heaters, chromatherapy mood light systems and ozone cleaning systems are allowing consumers to personalize their hydrotherapy experiences," she adds.

While consumers are looking for variety, simplicity in design is also important. Nate Jensen, national dealer sales manager for Best Bath Systems, in Caldwell, ID, says, "The average user of these products tends to be part of our growing boomer population. Easy design, use and cleaning are important."

Mars emphasizes simplicity of choice as another important aspect in jetted systems. "The use of intuitive technology continues to grow in many facets of consumers lives," she says. "We believe those consumers who use hydrotherapy and jetted systems want products that are both intuitive and can function in a range of ways."

There can be some perceived shortcomings to jetted systems, Aure reports, including noise and coolness that results when

air is introduced into the water. When systems are tailored to address these issues, such as in Aquatic's Driftbath that moves water with water, the soaking experience receives an extra special touch. "It's taking advantage of the trend of simple bathing, and if you want to introduce a system to it, enhancing that experience," she says.

There are some technologies that are increasingly important, such as inline heaters to keep water warm during a long soak, and surface heaters to keep a bather warm when filling or draining a tub. At the same time, the technology must add value to the room. "Technology that enhances and adds comfort or efficiency is important," says Moore. "Technology for the sake of technology isn't really worth the time."

UNADORNED BEAUTY

Simplicity extends beyond features and options to impact the color, shape and size of bathtubs on the market.

Most consumers stick to white or neutral tones for their tub, though they are introducing splashes of color in the overall bathroom design. "We're still seeing that the palette is white and muted beige, and grey is coming on strong as the new neutral," says Kornowa. From there, accents are being added in art, pillows, towels or trim, he says. "We're seeing a lot of creativity in splashes of color in the bathroom."

Moore says that white is still the most popular color for tubs, but he is starting to see the consumer bring more style and personality into the space by experimenting with warmer tones, like biscuit, sandbar and dune.

Jonathan Carter, marketing director at United Kingdom-based Victoria & Albert Baths, says that the firm only offers bathtub and vessel basins in classic white, which is by far the most popular. At the same time, he says, the company offers a material, ENGLISHCAST, rich in volcanic limestone that works



With the moveable Seaside bench and platform and heater wrap around, the **Helo Sauna & Steam** Seaside Interior was inspired by the experience of sitting by a bonfire as waves gently roll to shore. The bench is shown with the Pikku-tonnttu heater and rock accent wall. Circle No. 209 on Product Card



The Bathhaus Collection by **Whitehaus Collection** features three new luxurious copper freestanding soaker tub models. Each Whitehaus copper bathtub is handcrafted and created with 97% pure copper. The three new models are available in a hammered copper and hammered bronze finish. Circle No. 213 on Product Card



The compact size of **Victoria + Albert's** new ionian bath works well in smaller bathrooms. The freestanding soaking tub features a distinctive variable width rim that enhances its oval design, and includes an ergonomic design with a deep bathing well. Crafted from ENGLISHCAST, the brand's signature material of natural Volcanic Limestone and high performance resin, the ionian measures 24-1/8"x67"x31-1/4". Circle No. 210 on Product Card



The Underscore oval bath from **Kohler** uses the geometric style of the rectilinear Underscore bath, but translates it to an oval drop-in and a freestanding bath. The new bath is available as a soaking tub as well as with hydrotherapy experiences, including: VibrAcoustic technology, ProFlex BubbleMassage, Bask heated surface, chromatherapy lights and whirlpool, and a combination of hydrotherapies. Circle No. 211 on Product Card



The bathtub line from **Jacuzzi Luxury Bath** includes Bravo, which is available in six colors, two bathing experiences and two installation methods. The two-piece oval tub, fashioned from acrylic, is available in freestanding and drop-in versions, with a 5"-wide deck to support deck-mount faucets. In addition to solid white, oyster, almond and black, Bravo is also offered with a black or almond skirt with white bathing well. Soaking and PureAir technology are available. Circle No. 212 on Product Card



Tylo's Impression saunas use very little space while incorporating elegant design features, including expansive glass to make the room feel larger. The saunas are compact enough to fit in a small bathroom, with some models taking approximately the same footprint as a soaker tub. Circle No. 214 on Product Card

Product Trend Report



Two acrylic Loop & Friends freestanding wellness bathtubs have been added to **Villeroy & Boch's** line of tubs. The tubs, one square and one oval, feature a unique 3.5" edge surround that serves as a base for fixture installation or usability as easy-access shelving. The line of tubs is fashioned from Quaryl, an acrylic material that features optimal insulation qualities and creates a warm-to-touch surface. The smooth, pore-free surface is slip-resistant for safety. Circle No. 215 on Product Card



The new **Best Bath Systems' Escape Plus** walk-in tub features a large, ergonomic door that allows easy and safe access. The tub features a spacious design that enables complete water coverage, as well as an option for 22 heated air jets and directional water jets. Circle No. 219 on Product Card



The Placid Acrylic Bathtub from **Strom Plumbing by Sign of the Crab** is a contemporary take on the classic tub. A 75" acrylic freestanding tub, the Placid includes an integrated drain assembly in a variety of finish options. Circle No. 220 on Product Card

Amerec is introducing the A4 and A6 Touch Screen Steam Bath Controls designed for use with Smart Home systems. The low-profile, surface-mounted controls include features such as intelligent start, weekly programming, temperature and bath options control and energy-saving function. Circle No. 222 on Product Card



Steamist has added ShowerSense to its Total Sense selection of ChromaSense, AromaSense and AudioSense Spa Options. In addition, the Total Sense TSC-450 touchscreen digital control has been re-engineered, with a more stylish appearance and a new graphic display. ShowerSense allows the homeowner to use the TSC-450 control to select one of two different shower temperatures, programmed to match each user's preferences. The user can enjoy the shower experience through three outlets, such as a standard showerhead, a rain shower, hand-held or body spray. The control now features an ultra-thin profile that projects 0.4" from the wall. Circle No. 216 on Product Card



ThermaSol's sleek MicroTouch control works in the same manner as a smartphone or tablet: the touch of a finger controls the screen. Using capacitive touch technology (CTT), users can control their steam shower experience, including; on/off, temperature, PowerFlush system, or recall their last steam setting. The control is available in 14 finishes and a range of styles. Circle No. 217 on Product Card



The Aspen tub from **Native Trails** is a freestanding tub fashioned from recycled copper. The double-walled soaker tub is hand-hammered for a distinctive, rustic appearance, with angled sides and a deep interior. Circle No. 218 on Product Card

for home customization. Several projects have seen the designer commission special paint finishes on the outside of the tub, he adds, to act as a visual accent in the room.

Preferred tub size varies depending upon the space available, but many manufacturers are finding that smaller to mid-sized tubs are currently more in demand. Aure says the 66"x36" size is gaining in popularity for the master bath. "It's large enough to feel like a luxury item, but still not too big or ostentatious," she says. If the tub is going into a hall bath rather than a master, she adds, a smaller 60"x32" is often selected.

"Tubs that are smaller overall, but are deeper than standard tubs, are growing in popularity," Davis reports. The reason, she says, is two-fold. "Conscientious consumers who are concerned about water conservation are choosing smaller rather than larger tubs. And, there's a growing need for tubs for remodeling projects, and these smaller tubs fit in the existing spaces better than larger-sized tubs."

Jensen says that a mid-sized tub is the most popular choice for Best Bath Systems' customers. "This allows a variety of users to experience a comfortable bathing option, and does so without significant modification to the home or plumbing," he says.

Carter adds that the industry is experiencing a change in the way people think about freestanding tubs. "More and more homeowners are realizing that, while a freestanding tub looks great in a large room, the room doesn't have to be oversized. In fact, small bathroom spaces can often benefit the most from a small freestanding model, as it does not box in previous wall and floor space."

Design and materials are also following the clean and simple philosophy, resulting in a number of unique, but unfussy, looks. "The beauty of a number of the materials being used resides in the freedom that the designer has to create very unique shapes. We see a lot of geometric (rectangular) design, as well as completely organic and soft shapes," says L'Henaff.

Aure notes that modern design is still a trend, but the meaning of modern has shifted. While clean lines and streamlined design are still popular, she says, people don't want that look at the expense of comfort. "In the past, rigid, straight, ultra modern was a big deal. While the clean look is still important, people don't want to be uncomfortable when they sit in it, and they don't want it to look uncomfortable, either," she says. This has resulted in lines being softened, with the inclusion of added features such as arm or back rests. "Even just looking at these tubs, you can tell they are more welcoming and inviting," she notes.

EASY ACCESS

As the population ages, issues of safety and accessibility are moving to the forefront of design, particularly since there is a big shift toward people staying in their homes as long as possible. "One of overall trends that influences the bathroom is aging in place and how Universal Design fits in with that," Kornowa says. "A lot of people are adjusting their homes so that their homes can adapt to them as they get older."

Consumers are becoming more thoughtful in their selections, looking ahead to what they might need in years to come. But, they also don't want to sacrifice style for accessibility.

Manufacturers offer many solutions that provide easier access to the tub – from grab bars to wider decks to walk-in tubs with doors. "Safety and ease of use are still of the utmost importance," says Aure. She stresses that there are subtle changes that can be introduced, such as a grab bar or reduction of tub height when set into a deck, that makes access easier. "It doesn't take anything away from the design of the unit, and it adds to that streamlined, modern aesthetic," she says.

Jensen says the demand for accessible tubs and showers will rise as more of the market ages. "It is necessary for both the



Duravit's Blue Moon Pool features a circular water pool in a square body. The pool reaches a depth of 20-1/8", allowing users to completely immerse themselves in water illuminated by soft lights under the water's surface. The water in the indoor/outdoor pool is not drained after bathing, and remains at a constant 38 degrees C. Circle No. 221 on Product Card



The Rettangolo bathtubs from **Gessi** include a freestanding "library model" with open shelving and an adjacent convenient access compartment. Created by renowned Italian sculptor Prospero Rasulo, the new tubs feature a pure rectangular shape and minimalist lines that are well suited for modern and transitional spaces. The tubs are made of white Cristalplant, an Italian solid surface that is practically fireproof (class 1), UV-resistant and non-porous, the company notes. Circle No. 224 on Product Card

The Flower Petal Tub from **Hastings Tile & Bath** features exquisite shapes and vibrant colors. Created by artisan glass manufacturers using innovative materials, these tubs are lightweight and durable, according to the company. Circle No. 223 on Product Card



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Minimalist geometry is reflected in the contemporary Lyndon soaking tub, now available from DXV by **American Standard**. Constructed of acrylic with fiberglass reinforcement, the tub is available in canvas white. *Design by Marilyn G. Russell of Design Magnifique.* Circle No. 225 on Product Card

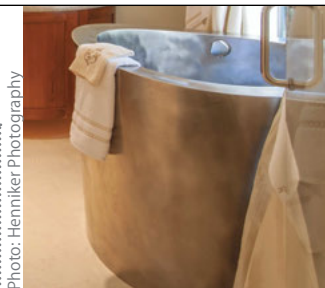


Photo: Henniker Photography

This freestanding copper tub from **Diamond Spas** is fabricated with a new system that infuses water under pressure with millions of micro-sized, oxygen-rich microbubbles, transforming the bath water into a cloud that helps moisturize, soften, restore and exfoliate skin. Circle No. 226 on Product Card



Part of the Kartell by **Laufen** bathroom, the Kartell tub is made of Laufen's proprietary SaphirKeramik, which allows for thin edges and a sleek design. Designed by Ludivica and Roberto Palomba, the tub also features grooves made of Sentec, a solid surface material, with LED lights fitted for atmospheric light scenes. Circle No. 228 on Product Card

MicroSilk Generation II technology from **Jason International** is an updated version of the company's MicroSilk Hydrotherapy, and presents a more minimalist design with fewer ports, less maintenance and a quieter system. MicroSilk's oxygen-rich microbubbles provide gentle, deep cleansing of the pores, leaving skin feeling smooth with less visible wrinkles, the firm notes. Circle No. 227 on Product Card



With the Power Zone System from **CG Air Systemes**, the user can control four different zones of whirlpool jets individually. The user can choose and adjust the desired speed of the sequence to create a personalized experience. Circle No. 229 on Product Card

public to place emphasis on the need, and for manufacturers to design and build products that are aesthetically beautiful and functional for accessible purposes," he says.

Kornowa agrees. While some consumers are selecting showers rather than tubs for accessibility reasons, he says, "You can get certain therapies from the tub that you cannot get in a shower. It is really dependent on the needs and desires of the individual."

When mobility becomes a larger issue, consumers are turning to walk-in tubs, and many manufacturers see this segment of the market growing. "Walk-in tubs continue to be popular choices as baby boomers age," says Davis. There are many features that are considered when selecting a walk-in model, she adds, including low thresholds for easier entry and exiting, ease of operation and cleaning, and inline or surface heaters to make the walk-in experience more appealing.

L'Henaff has seen some progression in the walk-in market. "Consumers are accepting walk-in tubs more and more," he comments. At the same time, he says, the product still carries a certain amount of stigma, and many designs are still too institutional.

A walk-in tub definitely serves a purpose, Kornowa says, but is often a last resort due to the impracticalities of how it works. There are ways to compensate, such as high-flow fillers, quick drains and radiant heat that make a walk-in more appealing, he adds. "If somebody truly needs or wants a walk-in tub, we've done everything we can think of to make it as comfortable as possible," he states.

director for Woodinville, WA-based Amerec, notes that recent trends are stable in this area, and budget is often a determining factor in whether or not the product is added to a space. "Although there seems to be growing interest in steam, project budgets are so tight, steam often gets cut," he says. "Sauna demand seems to have grown some, but it's still a relatively small market," he adds.

Martha Orellana, v.p. of sales and marketing for Queens, NY-based Mr. Steam says, "The fact that there is more interest in home steam showers is, in itself, a trend. Our showrooms are finding that they can get their clients excited about bathroom amenities that enhance a wellness lifestyle."

When steam is selected, she says, hot trends include beautifully designed and intuitive swipe-touch controls, simplified plug & play installation and easy care and maintenance.

There are many benefits to be gained from steam, says Orellana, who believes that the best steam systems incorporate many elements, including aromatherapy, chromatherapy, music therapy and body therapy, all of which add to the overall experience.

Moore believes steam is still a popular trend in the shower. When it comes to steam, he says, consumers want the right size generator, steam that comes quickly, and one control panel that manages all of the shower systems.

In the sauna market, Hass notes that infrared demand is greater than that for traditional saunas, primarily due to the ease of installation and portability of the infrared cabin. Glass elements and upgraded interiors are also becoming popular for saunas, he adds. "We're offering oiled woods, custom interior benching, valance lighting and glass panels to provide upscale designed saunas," Hass states. **KB**



The Fountain of Youth spas from **Cal Spas** offer MicroSilk technology by Jason International, which uses billions of oxygen-rich microbubbles to leave skin clean and moisturized. The two specialty indoor and outdoor spas are available in a lounge and bench configuration. Fifteen hydrotherapy jets can be added for a therapeutic experience. Circle No. 234 on Product Card

HEAT THERAPY

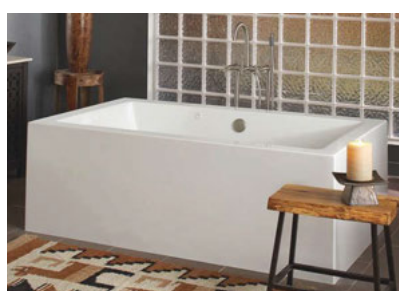
In addition to therapeutic bathing, there is a rising interest in both home steam systems and sauna rooms. Jim Hass, sales

The Esthesia Collection of therapeutic baths from **BainUltra** features designs inspired by Neoclassicism, with clean geometric lines complemented by gentle curves. Available as a freestanding tub or as a drop-in, undermount or Theatre Stage, the 100-percent acrylic Esthesia features a rounded rectangular profile that is generously sized and fits two comfortably. Therapy options include the company's ThermoMasseur, Geysair and ThermoSens. Circle No. 231 on Product Card



The Berks is a contemporary and spacious freestanding bathtub now available from **Laurel Mountain Whirlpool**. Available in two sizes, the Atlas can comfortably accommodate two bathers, and features dual backrests. Atlas is offered as a whirlpool, air bath, combination tub or soaking tub, and is available with a range of options for customization. Circle No. 232 on Product Card

A classical inspired freestanding bathtub, Capitol from **Devon & Devon** features an aluminum external surface embellished with geometric decorations in relief and an internal tub of enameled cast iron. The tub is available in all of the 213 colors from the company's enamel collection. The tub is shown with Jubilee Black Lever taps for deck installation in a chrome finish. Circle No. 233 on Product Card





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Products Promote Safety in the Kitchen

From high function to high tech, the new range of kitchen products take into consideration the need for safety and ease of use for people of all abilities. While homeowners with limited mobility who have chosen to age in place can appreciate products that make their lives easier and provide more functionality, many current product versions have been designed with multiple users in mind – including the youngest consumers and their safety-conscious parents.

Easy-to-access cabinet interiors, cool-touch surfaces, pre-programmed user settings and touchless components are welcome additions to the kitchens designed for people of all ages, and make working in these rooms easier, safer and smarter.

This month, *Kitchen & Bath Design News* offers a glimpse of products that offer safety, accessibility and beautiful style.

1. GE's new French door wall oven offers professional-grade cooking technology. The oven has doors that open in the middle instead of the top, allowing the user to stand closer while lifting items out of the oven. True European Convection with Direct Air system delivers evenly cooked results, the company notes.

Circle No. 240 on Product Card

2. The Design Series of Induction Cooktops from **Bertazzoni** features touch controls, four individually controlled induction heating zones and a beveled black glass ceramic top. Thanks to a booster function, the full energy becomes available instantaneously and is delivered directly to the cookware, thus eliminating heat-up time. The cooktops are available in 30" and 36" models.

Circle No. 241 on Product Card

3. The LeMans Highboard corner storage swivel tray system from **Häfele America** features four shelves that can accommodate up to 55 lbs. each. The shelves move independently of one another and are available in maple or white with either champagne or chrome accents.

Circle No. 242 on Product Card

4. **KWC's** ZOE kitchen faucet features elegantly curved lines at the spout and base, and a faceplate, through the Turn and Clean mechanism, can be released for easy cleaning. The LUMINAQUA LED light ring is incorporated into the pull-out spray to illuminate the sink and water. A low-profile lever moves in three directions to control water flow and temperature. It is available in white, black and champagne finishes.

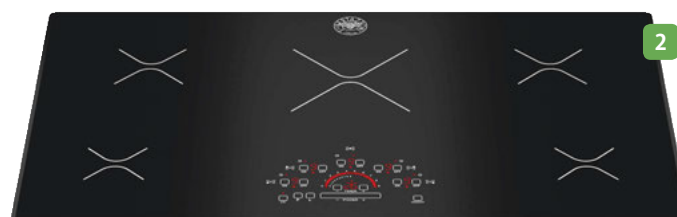
Circle No. 243 on Product Card

5. **Perlick's** Signature Series Sottile collection includes luxury undercounter refrigerators, beverage centers and wine reserves that boast a unique 18"-deep profile and are ADA compliant for Universal Design. The indoor and UL-rated outdoor units have front-vented, RAPIDcool forced-air refrigeration technology; full-extension adjustable shelves; digital temperature controller, and adjustable LED lighting.

Circle No. 244 on Product Card

6. **Danze** expands its kitchen offerings with the Did-U-Wave line of digital faucets. The faucets feature an infrared sensor for motion activation, a task light on the end of the spray head for added functionality and SnapBack Technology that ensures the head snaps back in place after each use. Available in chrome and stainless steel finishes, the faucets include dual functionality (aerated and stream).

Circle No. 245 on Product Card



7. A trimless design option of **Thermador's** 36" Freedom Induction Cooktop features a solid dark gray surface that seamlessly integrates into the countertop. The cooktop recognizes cookware size, shape and position to deliver heat without boundaries, allowing cooks to use pots and pans of any shape and size and place them anywhere on the surface. Features include the PowerBoost for rapid boil, full-color touch screen display and range of 4,600-watt maximum and 15-watt minimum power output.

Circle No. 246 on Product Card

8. **HomeCrest Cabinetry's** Base Microwave Cabinet is now available with a larger opening to accommodate more sizes, a functional standard-sized drawer and trimmable top rail. The cabinet is designed for optimum safety and accessibility.

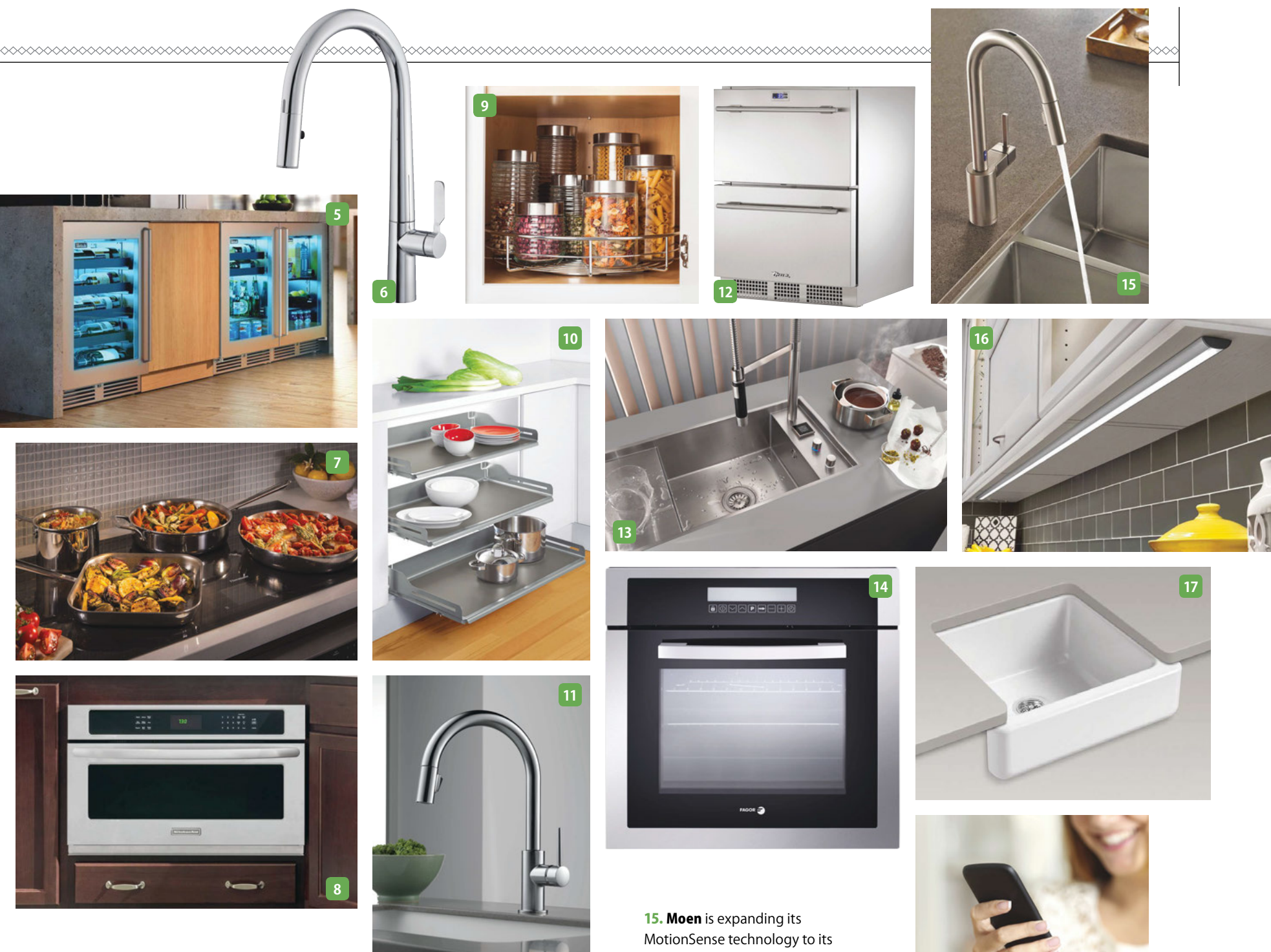
Circle No. 247 on Product Card

9. The 'Organize Your Kitchen in 11 Minutes or Less' line of kitchen organizers from **Hardware Resources** features a range of products that can be installed using only a few screws. The Single Shelf Lazy Susan, shown, features a 360-degree revolving tray that fits in a 24" diagonal corner cabinet. The lazy susan has a polished chrome finish.

Circle No. 248 on Product Card

10. The CAVARE pull-out shelf system from **Richelieu Hardware** creates multiple levels and sections for organizing a variety of items. Made of metal and available in three widths to fit a variety of cabinets and closets, the shelves are situated on extension slides available with slow-motion movement for added safety when opening. Strong magnetic dividers can be used to divide shelf surfaces into smaller areas in any custom arrangement.

Circle No. 249 on Product Card



11. Featuring sleek, modern design, the Trinsic kitchen faucet from **Delta Faucet Co.** now features Touch2O Technology. The touch-activated faucet turns on and off with just a touch anywhere on the spout or handle, and features an automatic water flow shut-off after one minute when water is left running. ADA compliant, the faucet features Delta's Diamond Seal technology and Magnatite Docking for the pull-out. Finishes include Chrome, Champagne Bronze and Arctic Stainless.
Circle No. 250 on Product Card

12. **True Professional Series'** Undercounter Refrigerator Drawers feature True-glide self-closing technology that enables the drawers to quietly close themselves with a touch. At 24" wide, the Undercounter Refrigerator Drawers add 5.6 cubic feet of refrigerated space.
Circle No. 251 on Product Card

13. **Dornbracht's** new digital control concept – Smart Water – allows the user to turn water on and off with a foot sensor, choose the exact amount of cups or quarts for a recipe and preprogram settings, so that water always turns on at the exact desired temperature and volume. With a press of a button, the electronic drain opens and closes, eliminating the need to put hands in dirty water. With a sleek, simple aesthetic, Smart Water controls include a simple display switch and two control knobs for volume and temperature.
Circle No. 252 on Product Card

14. The 24" Drop Down Oven is the latest addition to **Fagor America's** line of Stainless Steel European-style convection ovens. Included within this new addition are 10 cooking programs, a detailed LCD touch screen and a Cold Safety Door, which is designed with three layers of insulated glass to keep the cooking area safe. A third heating element surrounds the convection fan to circulate pre-heated air evenly throughout the interior of the oven.
Circle No. 253 on Product Card

15. **Moen** is expanding its MotionSense technology to its STo and Align pull-down kitchen faucets. The new Align pull-down kitchen faucet with MotionSense, shown, sports sleek and streamlined components. The faucet can be controlled via the Wave Sensor at the top of the faucet, the Ready Sensor near the base of the faucet and the handle on the side for manual operation. Water-temperature control is at the faucet handle when in hands-free mode, and an LED light indicates when the faucet turns on or off. Align is available in Chrome and Spot Resist Stainless.
Circle No. 254 on Product Card

16. **Tresco Lighting By Rev-A-Shelf** has introduced Infinex linear lighting systems. The patent-pending LED aluminum extrusion system allows users to choose their style, cut to desired length and assemble to create a customized LED fixture. Designed by Tresco's in-house engineers and made in the U.S., Infinex carries a UL safety certification and is available in five profiles with an array of installation options.
Circle No. 255 on Product Card

17. The Whitehaven line of kitchen sinks from **Kohler** has expanded with the addition of a 24" model. The sink features classic styling in enameled cast iron composed of 80% recycled materials in 16 color choices. Available in 9" and 7" depths, the undercounter design makes for easier clean-up by enabling the user to sweep waste directly into the sink while also maximizing the amount of counter space.
Circle No. 256 on Product Card

18. Homeowners can use voice activation on their smart phones or tablets to remotely control their Discovery iQ cooking appliances from **Dacor**. The company's smart cooking appliances, including the Dual-Fuel ranges and single and double wall ovens, feature the Dacor iQ Remote App, with proprietary technology that makes it possible for home chefs to remotely control the range. It also enables users to upgrade their devices remotely with new features, such as voice activation technology.
Circle No. 257 on Product Card

Manufacturing & Fabricating



Sliding Storage System

Designed to provide a storage solution, **Glideware** keeps cookware quiet as it slides in and out with the Glideware Synchronized Motion feature. The innovative storage accessory now features smooth running, soft-close technology from Blum. It is constructed from clear hard maple, and the unit's adjustable hook system holds 100 lbs. Glideware products are made in the U.S. Circle No. 260 on Product Card



Aluminum Rail Drawer Pull

Doug Mockett & Co.'s Grip Rail Drawer Pull is fashioned from aluminum and provides a clean-lined, minimalist look. The DP215 aluminum extrusion does not require any routing of the drawer, screws in from the top and is cut to size. The pull is made to order from 5" up to 6'. Circle No. 261 on Product Card



NY Collection Wood Components

Characterized by clean, contemporary lines and made from North American hardwood, the NY Collection of wood carvings from **Art for Everyday** includes corbels, molding, corner posts and island posts. Drawing inspiration from Art Deco motifs and styling, the pieces are available in a range of wood species. Circle No. 262 on Product Card



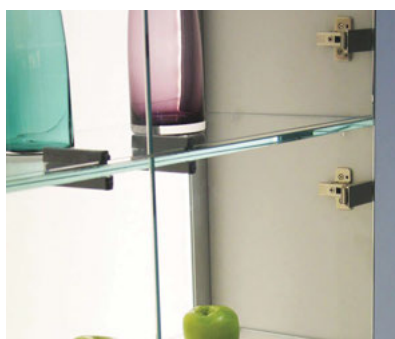
Verso Hardware

Cabinet lifts from **Häfele America**, which lift cabinet doors up and out of the way, have been improved to operate on a coil-spring system and offer a Soft & Silent feature to silently slide or swing the cabinet door open and closed without a slam. With the Verso lift, shown, the door travels up and over the cabinet, so homeowners can see everything in the cabinet. The Verso stays in place at any opened position. Circle No. 263 on Product Card



Solid Color Laminates

Abet Laminati offers high-pressure laminate surfaces in over 300 solid colors in various textures and finishes. Solid colors can be mix and matched with the company's metals, textures, woodgrains and digital designs. The high-pressure laminates can be used to create furniture, cabinets, shelving and other items, and can be postformed for horizontal or vertical applications. Circle No. 264 on Product Card



Glass Cabinet Doors

Element Designs introduces its solid glass cabinet doors for kitchen and bath applications. The frameless doors utilize CRISTALLO hinges by Blum. They are available in 5/32" or 1/4" glass in either clear, low-iron clear, satin, smoked or custom etched glass. Circle No. 265 on Product Card



LED Cabinet Lighting

Richelieu Hardware's latest line of LED products includes the LED Leaf for drawers or cabinets. The drawer version is mounted on an easy-to-install sliding mechanism, while the cabinet version is mounted directly on the cabinet top interior. Both models are equipped with sensors that turn lights on and off when the cabinet or drawer is opened or closed. Circle No. 266 on Product Card



Chrome Blind Corner Systems

Chrome blind corner optimizers from **Rev-A-Shelf** now feature Soft-Close technology. The corner storage systems come fully assembled for ease of installation in most 45" blind corner cabinets with 15" and 18" openings. Large chrome-plated baskets with chrome accent railing are featured. Circle No. 268 on Product Card

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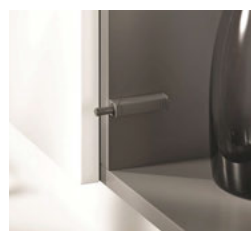
Cabinet Paint Finishes

Keystone Wood Specialties offers a range of gray and white paint colors for cabinet doors, drawer fronts, moulding and veneer. Seven standard grays and five whites are offered, as well as custom color-match capabilities. All finished Keystone products are completed with two coats of a specially formulated, moisture-resistant catalyzed varnish. Circle No. 267 on Product Card



TIP-ON Hinge

Blum's TIP-ON unit now comes with a wider range of adapter plates and a new feature that allows the user to make tool-free adjustments of the door gap with a single rotation. TIP-ON comes in two lengths, with an option for drilling or using an adapter plate, depending on the application. Circle No. 269 on Product Card



Mullion Lite Pattern Options

Several new Mullion Lite Pattern Options have been added to the current collection from **WalzCraft**. Over 65 designs are available in numerous profiles, wood species and finish combinations. Custom Lite Patterns can also be created. Circle No. 270 on Product Card



Cabinet Door Glazes

Conestoga Wood Specialties Corp. now offers five glaze options that are available on the majority of the company's 1,200 Prism Paint colors to add depth and definition to cabinets and accessories. Glaze options include Caramel, Chai, Coffee, Oyster and Pewter. Circle No. 271 on Product Card



Vionaro Drawer System

Grass America's Vionaro creates a new drawer system offering slim drawer dimensions and high-grade material. The drawer system features strong right angles and offers a slim 13mm double wall side. A low opening pull force and abrasion-resistant nylon rollers provide even operation, according to the company. The drawer members travel on the company's Dynapro undermount system. Circle No. 272 on Product Card

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